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MR. DISRAELI'S GENERALSHIP.

THE determination not to divide on the second reading of Lord JOHN RUSSELL'S measure was probably a wise one. It is possible that a Reform Bill must be carried, and likely that it must be carried by the party now in power; so that an attempt to resist it on principle would perhaps have had all the disadvantages of a struggle against necessity. It is not easy to say how far the persons who united in favour of Lord JOHN RUSSELL'S resolution last year still consider themselves hampered by that imprudent and not very honest combination; but the chances certainly are that they all feel too much compromised to desert the Government on the broad question whether there shall be a Reform Bill at all. The course which has been taken by the Opposition has, moreover, discredited the Bill as much as the most successful division could have done. The successive adjournments of the debate have already rendered it contemptible. If it really passes into a law, the success of so serious a measure, after so absurd a march through Parliament, will be a new fact in our Constitutional history. So far, too, as there has been any discussion at all, it has added to the general disrelish and disdain. The most damaging speeches against the measure have been made from the Ministerial side, and the few members who have supported it have been satisfied with repeating the most idiotic commonplaces of that school which now includes all the Noodles of the day—the Optimist Liberal sect. The argument that the suffrage must be lowered because the railways go fast ought at once to put an end to the notion that all the stupidity of the country is monopolized by Mr. CHOWLER and his friends.

We are bound to make this admission of Mr. DISRAELI'S prudence in not opposing the second reading, because we are forced to say that whatever fear we entertain of the Bill's ultimate success is derived from distrust of Mr. DISRAELI'S generalship. The speech in which he announced his intention was as unsatisfactory as the intention itself was promising. Never was such an opportunity for a Conservative leader. All the Conservatism of the House has been set free—the latent Conservatism of the Ministerialists as well as the patent Conservatism of the Opposition—and all that has to be done is to collect it into one focus. Almost any leading Conservative could do this, but then Mr. DISRAELI is unfortunately not a Conservative, but only a person of undetermined politics, who has nearly absolute control over a Conservative party. His criticisms on the Government scheme were directed against the wrong points almost without exception. The formula which a Conservative tactician ought to con over, and by which he ought to regulate his present policy, is of the simplest description. Any reform which swamps the existing constituencies is dangerous, and the best reform is that which does this least. A ten-pound franchise is better than a nine-pound—a nine-pound than an eight-pound—an eight-pound than a seven—a seven-pound than a six. Mr. DISRAELI all but takes away from himself the power to act upon these simple principles through amendments on the Bill in Committee, first by his sophistry, and next by his uncalled-for encomium on his measure of last year. The sophistries, which we recognise as pretty nearly identical with those paraded by our old friend the *Press* under the dynasty of RATHBORNE, are worthless in themselves, and are calculated to put out of sight the plain truth that it is perilous to transfer the entirety of political power to a new class of electors, whatever be their conjectural or hypothetical recommendations. Then, again, the attempt to set up the credit of last year's Bill can only serve to commit the Conservative party to a false plan and false principles of action. Mr. DISRAELI still insists that his varied franchises would have admitted almost as many people to the suffrage as a six-pound qualification

will do. If he be right, we can only say, thank you for nothing! The question whether the commonest prudence will allow any class to be enfranchised numerous enough to overpower the old constituencies, altogether takes precedence of the question which class had best be enfranchised. It is just possible that the fancy franchises would have let in a flood less strongly mixed with the sewage of ignorance and recklessness than Lord JOHN'S new qualification will do; but the important point is how can we lessen the total force and amount of the torrent with which the pipes, pumps, and passages of the Constitution are to be overwhelmed. Any pledges which, though merely given for sophistical or rhetorical purposes, tend to estop the Conservatives from amending the Bill by raising the minimum of qualification, are so much dead loss to the cause which, after all, is the ultimate reason of the existence of a Conservative party.

We can best explain our apprehensions by saying that we fear Mr. DISRAELI does not, even in this case, intend to depart from the principles of conduct which he has evidently prescribed to himself since his accession to the headship of his party. One of these is never to admit any good in a present political opponent, or to assert any evil of any class with which he may hereafter have occasion to ally himself. It is among many inconveniences attending this rule that, while it binds Mr. DISRAELI to give no Whig nobleman credit for the feeblest capacity, it forbids him to say a hard word of a Chartist bricklayer. Another of his principles is never to advance a proposition which it can by any possibility become expedient for him to recant. This determination never to commit himself on any subject, or at all events never to commit himself in plain and downright language, was, we doubt not, suggested to him by the fate of Sir ROBERT PEEL. He is keenly sensitive to the pain of being taunted with dishonesty, and conceives, we suppose, that it is more honest to have no opinions at all than to have opinions and afterwards to change them. But there is no use in trying to be honest by a mere effort of cleverness. Mr. DISRAELI'S precautions, without winning for him any very solid reputation for consistency, have the effect of leaving his party without nerve or spirit for energetic action even on questions of life and death. What can be narrower or more hopeless than the position to which, in his fear of compromising himself, he would confine them on the Reform Bill? They are not to be allowed to assert that the working-classes are not intellectually fitted for political supremacy. That would be a definite and therefore a dangerous proposition. It might have to be recanted by Mr. DISRAELI, just as the unfitness of Roman Catholics for the full possession of political power had to be recanted by Sir ROBERT PEEL. The statesmanship of Mr. DISRAELI prompts him accordingly to the more skilful course of admitting, with the amplest latitude of phrase, the intelligence and political capacity of the labouring class, but of neutralizing the admission by the statement that they cannot for the present be enfranchised, because they are distinguished from all other classes by their power of organization and combination. In order that this curious argument may hold water at all, it is necessary to maintain that the Anti-Corn-law League was not a sample of successful combination on the part of the middle class, and hence Mr. DISRAELI would have us believe that the League was just going to pieces when Sir ROBERT PEEL took its mission out of its hands. Even, however, could the difficulty presented by the Anti-Corn-law League be got out of the way, what a ground is Mr. DISRAELI'S for a Conservative party to rest upon! He lays down that, if Mr. POTTER had not taught them to combine, the bricklayers and hodmen of London would have been excellent recipients of the suffrage.

An eminent public character—the late Mr. WILLIAM PALMER, of Rugeley—is said, at the most critical moment of

his life, to have paid the highest of compliments to the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, who had just obtained a verdict against him, by remarking to a legal friend, "I say, JERRY, it's the 'riding as has done it!'" We take leave to apply the same phrase to Mr. DISRAELI's command of his party, in the reverse sense. It's the riding as does it—and infamous riding it is. It is true that Mr. DISRAELI has almost every quality of jockeyship, except the highest of all—that of riding a winning race on the favourite. Nobody understands better than he the art of managing a disappointment for the general public. Nobody can carry out so cleverly a complicated arrangement, under which this horse is to be made safe, that horse to be pulled up, a third to be ridden against, a fourth (an outsider) to be coaxed to the front. The one thing he cannot do is to ride the best horse of all straight to victory—and that is unfortunately the very part which devolves on him in the contest on the Reform Bill.

ITALY.

THE formation of an Italian kingdom is the most important change which has taken place in Europe since the settlement of 1815. A State with eleven millions of inhabitants, of the same blood and language, ought to be able to defend its independence against all opponents. The Prussia of FREDERICK the GREAT, though far less wealthy and less populous, maintained itself against the active hostility of three great military empires. The Prussian army which made head against NAPOLEON in 1813 was levied from a reduced population of scarcely more than five millions. With a soldier on the throne, and a great statesman at the head of affairs, North Italy has every prospect of asserting a permanent position in the European community. It is not, perhaps, to be regretted that the regenerated nation is unlikely to be rocked and dandled into a prosperous existence. As it has been well observed, the cement of the agglomerated provinces is still wet, and a strong pressure from without will be useful in holding the fabric together. The municipal spirit of jealousy and isolation may perhaps revive when the different portions of the kingdom have leisure to reflect on their several domestic interests. For the present, the liberated half of Italy will be united by the common anxieties, dangers, and hopes, which necessarily arise from the circumstances of the union. On the North-east, the Italian kingdom is separated by an indefensible frontier from a great and hostile military Power, which avowedly only waits an occasion of revenge. On the North-west, the French outposts are almost in sight of Turin, and the seizure of the county of Nice has the effect of outflanking western Piedmont along the shore of the Mediterranean. The Emperor NAPOLEON, by his genuine or simulated protest against the annexation of Tuscany, has left himself at liberty to disturb North Italy by menaces and intrigues, whenever it suits his purpose to foment the elements of trouble. Neither of the immemorial enemies of Italy will willingly abandon the possession of their ancient battlefield in the valley of the Po.

A more immediate danger, but of a different kind, is to be seriously apprehended in the South. The King will find a difficulty, not in defending the frontier of Romagna and of Tuscany, but in restraining the eager sympathy of the POPE's remaining subjects. The marsh of Ancona is not divided by any physical or moral boundary from the liberated province of Romagna, nor are the inhabitants of Umbria and of the Perugian territory content with a degraded condition which contrasts invidiously with the freedom of their neighbours. Sardinian agents have for some time found a difficulty in restraining the inconvenient zeal of the border districts, and the demand for a farther annexation may soon be found equally embarrassing and dangerous; while the Emperor of the FRENCH would not be sorry to revive his reputation for ecclesiastical loyalty by inflicting a check on an ally who has of late affected an unpalatable independence. There can be no doubt that the encroachments of sovereigns on the territories of neighbouring States are objectionable in principle, even when they are excused by the instincts of nationality. Romagna, after ten years of Austrian occupation, passed into a condition of independence without any interval of Papal administration; and the Duchies, which had always possessed a separate political existence, disposed of their own fortunes by a dynastic change involving no territorial revolution. The authorities of Rome have still kept their hold on the remaining possessions of the Church, and VICTOR EMMANUEL could only accept a farther addition to

his dominions by a formal violation of public law. It is the duty and interest of his subjects to co-operate with their Government in the avoidance, as far as possible, of complications which might possibly endanger their new-born freedom. As the foreign policy of their country will for a long time deserve all their attention, they will probably be the less disposed to dwell on internal difficulties which may occur at home.

The spiritual weapons which it has long been foreseen that the POPE would, in some form, employ, are not to be altogether despised. He has launched a bull of major excommunication collectively against those who have aided or counselled rebellion, invasion, or usurpation in the Romagna; but it is scarcely probable that he will be so ill advised as to discharge his last barrel, in the form of a similar decree against his rebellious son individually, though he may combine the infliction of considerable annoyance with the precaution of reserving his fire. It is not impossible that the Church may think it expedient to precipitate a schism before the bulk of the population is prepared for the revolt. Open religious dissension might still divide a nation which has known how to achieve political unanimity, and Rome has always been most efficiently served under the immediate influence of local sectarian animosity. The Catholic persecutors of the French League and of the Thirty Years' War displayed a devotion to the Holy See which had been utterly unknown to their ancestors before the Reformation; and it is impossible to say whether the majority, even in Piedmont itself, might not, if it were forced to make the choice, still adhere to the side of orthodoxy. In the mean time, VICTOR EMMANUEL will do well to persevere in the profession of canonical obedience, which, more certainly, perhaps, than any of his flagrant enormities, warms up the soul of PIUS IX. into paroxysms of pious fury.

The follies of the Neapolitan Government involve another grave danger to Italy. Whatever may be the ultimate destiny of the Peninsula, the maintenance of two considerable kingdoms within its limits would, for the present, be safer and more desirable than any premature effort at unity. There is nothing but the incurable corruption of their race to prevent the Southern BOURBONS from following the example which has been set by the House of SAVOY. The dynasty has been acclimatized by long possession of the throne, and, with a liberal Constitution and a national policy, it might possibly still efface the recollection of its crimes and its degradation. In case of foreign war, Northern Italy and Naples could together well maintain an army of two hundred thousand men, and their united pressure on Rome would probably be sufficient to exclude all Transalpine interference. A revolution in the South would, in addition to its other disadvantages, provide an immediate opening for French intrigue. There is a Bonapartist pretender ready to make good the disappointment occasioned by the abortive expedition of Prince NAPOLEON to Florence, and a foreign dynasty supported from abroad would be a more irremediable evil than an indigenous tyrant. Lord JOHN RUSSELL's remonstrances were perhaps not altogether conformable to diplomatic precedent, but the advice which they contained was sound, although it appears to have been conveyed in the form which was least likely to produce a practical effect. In Naples, as in every other part of Italy, the intelligent minority desires to remedy intolerable grievances at the smallest expenditure of violence and external change. If the feeble king could be emancipated from the tutelage of priests and of courtiers, no considerable party would for the present desire union with Northern Italy.

It is difficult to understand the motive which induces the French Government to countenance a Neapolitan occupation of Rome. Up to the present time, the POPE's discontented subjects have found a kind of consolation in the belief that the troops who retained them in subjection sympathized to a certain extent with their repugnance to priestly dominion. The conduct of the garrison has generally been unobjectionable, and since the apparent rupture between the EMPEROR and the POPE, a vague hope has prevailed that the French force would at some future time be employed in aid of the national cause. Neapolitan regiments, habitually employed at home in support of the most extravagant tyranny, will be regarded by the Romans at the same time with aversion and contempt. Disciplined troops are in almost all cases more than a match for irregular opponents, and as long as the King of Northern Italy abstains from interference, the restlessness of the Ecclesiastical States may be violently restrained; but it seems scarcely possible that the last

remnants of loyalty to the POPE will survive the new demonstration of his utter indifference to the duties of sovereignty and to the rights and feelings of his subjects. If the Emperor NAPOLEON makes room for a garrison from Naples, it is evident that he meditates a blow against Rome, against Northern Italy, or against Naples itself; and perhaps his benevolent intentions may apply impartially to all. His sanction of the appointment of a French Orleanist General to command the Papal troops adds a further complication to his inscrutable system of policy. It is scarcely credible that the friends of constitutional freedom in France should have recommended LAMORICIERE to place himself at the head of the Swiss mercenaries and Austrian recruits who form, with the expected Neapolitan contingent, the last resource of Papal oppression.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

THE authentic report of Mr. WILSON's financial statement is so far satisfactory that it proves the rumoured experiment upon the military system of India to have been one of the many fabrications due to the lively imagination of the Calcutta correspondent of the *Times*. But we only escape one risk to fall into another; for though Mr. WILSON has not proposed to plunge India into military difficulties, he has prepared financial pitfalls which are only a few degrees less threatening to the solidity of our Indian Empire. The elaborate and rather ambitious statement in which the new Minister has announced his intentions, when reduced to its essential elements, is simple enough. The Government, says Mr. WILSON, has been going from bad to worse, and its financial position has become almost desperate. At the same time the country has been growing rapidly in wealth, and the people are more lightly taxed than any nation in the world. The conclusion from these premises is that the State requires, and the country can bear, whatever additional taxation may be necessary to restore equilibrium to the finances. Notwithstanding the vague and magniloquent oratory in which Mr. WILSON indulged before his departure from England, he has been driven to resort to the same vulgar expedient of more taxation which commended itself as the only practicable resource to the less distinguished financiers who had previously administered the affairs of India.

It has always been abundantly clear that the chronic deficit with which we have become familiar in Indian balance sheets could not be immediately filled up without imposing new burdens on the inhabitants of the country. Few persons will blame Mr. WILSON for having boldly grappled with the necessity for levying new taxes. In this he did but follow the policy already traced, and in some measure acted upon, by the Calcutta authorities. The merits or demerits of his Budget depend more upon the details of the proposed taxes than upon any novelty in the general scope of the programme. The smaller part of the scheme consists of modifications of the tariff as settled about a year ago. Experience has clearly shown that the heavy customs duty of twenty per cent. which was laid upon some luxuries that entered into the consumption of European residents was too high even for revenue purposes. A marked decline in the imports gave warning that the tariff had gone too far in this direction, and it is now, very properly, proposed to diminish the duty to ten per cent., and at the same time to abolish a few duties on raw material which brought in very little to the revenue, while they crippled the commercial development of the country. The loss is far more than balanced by a heavy tax on saltpetre, and a ten per cent. duty on the import of cotton yarns. Both of these proposals may be open to objection, but in the critical state of India it is scarcely fair to pass a severe judgment upon any tax which is imposed simply with a view to revenue, and which is likely to be submitted to without much discontent. The changes in the tariff seem, upon the whole, to be judicious, and they have the recommendation of adding a quarter of a million to the revenue, while they set free the trade in wool, hemp, hides, flax, and tea, all of which are, or promise to become, staple products of Indian industry.

These matters, like the minor details with which Mr. GLADSTONE filled up his minor chasm, have but little to do with the substance of the Budget. They leave an anticipated deficit of 6,000,000*l.* to be provided for, and it is by the plan proposed for levying this formidable amount of revenue that Mr. WILSON's scheme must stand or fall. We are so accustomed here to see a Chancellor of the Exchequer

fall back upon the Income-tax on every emergency, that it will not occasion much surprise to any one to learn that Mr. WILSON, on arriving in Calcutta, fresh from the atmosphere of the House of Commons, should have straightway resorted to this ultimate resource of distressed financiers. The void is to be filled up partly with a License-tax, moderate in amount, though very sweeping in its operation, but mainly with an Income-tax, which is the pith and marrow of the whole financial scheme. To some extent, Mr. HARRINGTON's modified License Bill had anticipated this project, and the new plan differs chiefly from that which it supersedes by disregarding the differences which exist between English and Indian society. Mr. HARRINGTON's plan was to divide the whole community, except the fundholders and Zemindars, into a number of classes, on which the impost was to be rather roughly graduated according to their presumed wealth. There was to be no attempt to ascertain with precision the exact income of each individual trader, but the demands of justice and convenience were to be to some extent conciliated by assigning every one, as nearly as might be, to his appropriate class, and levying a uniform tax upon all who thus fell under the same category. Mr. WILSON departs from this scheme in two important particulars. He extends the tax to those who derive their incomes from the land and the public funds, and he proposes to apply to Hindoos and Parsees the method of self-assessment which has proved to be too severe a temptation for the consciences of ordinary Englishmen. Both of these variations may be fraught with danger which it is difficult adequately to estimate.

It may be conceded to Mr. WILSON that he has made out a plausible and even a sound case against the fundholder and the Zemindar. He argues fairly enough that their right to exemption cannot be stronger than that of the English stockholder, whose title to dividends at the stipulated rate, undiminished by any "taxes, charges, or impositions whatsoever," is secured to him by the express terms of the statutes under which the stock was created. Mr. PITT and Sir R. PEEL, and every other statesman who has had to do with the Income-tax, have, one and all, agreed on the principle that the immunity of the fundholder is limited to special taxes, and does not extend to relieve him from any general tax laid upon him in common with every other class in the country. If this precedent is sound—and it can scarcely now be disputed in England—it is difficult to question the moral right of the Calcutta Government to bring within the sweep of a universal Income-tax the Zemindars, who enjoy their land at a fixed perpetual rent, and the capitalists who have lent money to the Government at a fixed rate of interest. But in India it is not enough to deal out strict justice unless the equity of our rule commends itself to the feelings of the country. Our character for integrity is a more valuable element of strength than the most powerful army which can be maintained in the country; and it is not worth while, for the sake of increasing the productiveness of the tax, to incur, in the estimation of the natives, the reproach of unfair dealing. There is no indication in Mr. WILSON's statement that he has given a moment's thought to such considerations. He had got his English precedent, and he applies it with perfect disregard of any differences which may exist between the feelings of Englishmen and Hindoostanees on a subject which certainly admits of being regarded in very opposite lights.

The same narrow way of viewing India exclusively by the aid of English experience has shown itself, in a still more monstrous shape, in the wild idea of importing all the machinery of our Income-tax as an engine for the extraction of revenue from the hoards of native capitalists. Even in this country, the general tone of morality is not high enough to make the scheme work without much unfairness. No amount of inquisition which would be endured for a moment would suffice to prevent frauds under a system where every shopkeeper is required to adjust the burden to his own shoulders. To make schedule D realize its full amount, the average honesty of mankind should be of a quality which the world has not yet seen. We think ourselves, upon the whole, a truthful and fair-dealing people, and yet no one was surprised at the statement made a few days ago in the House of Commons, that the average gains on which the superannuated proctors calculated the compensation which they claimed were more than double the amounts which they had returned to the Income-tax assessors. There is no reason to suppose that proctors are a less upright class than the ordinary run of professional and commercial men, and the only inference to

be drawn from this curious discovery is, that Englishmen are not always too high-minded to reduce their assessment to the lowest practicable measure. But, if this is the result in a country which boasts of its integrity, what is to be expected of the natives of India, with whom falsehood is scarcely considered as a moral offence? Evasions, on an enormous scale, balanced in other instances by exactions dictated by the caprice of Government collectors, will be the inevitable fruits of an Indian Income-tax assessed and collected on the English principle. Either the revenue obtained will wholly disappoint the expectations entertained, or an amount of injustice will be perpetrated which will do more to estrange the people from our rule than any other measure that could be adopted. Mr. HARRINGTON's scheme was certainly far from perfect; but, by avoiding the attempt to assess every one exactly in proportion to his income, and contenting himself with a tolerable approximation to theoretical fairness, he produced a measure which had at least a chance of escaping the rocks on which Mr. WILSON's project is almost certain to be wrecked.

THE EAGLE OF BOULOGNE.

THE Imperial bird has played over again its performance at Boulogne. It has once more taken wing to soar in quest of a grand idea, and, while the world gazed upward, and Imperialist poetesses fell into dithyrambs, it has again alighted in the sausage shop. The European community shouts and hoots to make the majestic robber relinquish his booty. The poetesses write supplementary odes in a pensive strain, stating that, owing to the unworthiness of the world, the grand idea is unavoidably postponed. But the sausage is triumphantly borne off. We are bound to own that nothing could be cleverer. It is the masterpiece of a life devoted to the realization of grand ideas. The Eldest Son of the Church has sanded the sugar and watered the rum to perfection; and he may now come down with some satisfaction to keep a pious Easter. The skill with which our Government were induced to believe that the annexation of Savoy was an open question, to be settled by universal suffrage or the judgment of the Powers, till the Commercial Treaty was irrevocably settled, will be recognised by all France as a stroke of true greatness. The only move the beauty of which we cannot entirely appreciate is the insolently absurd reason given by LOUIS NAPOLEON for putting force upon his inclinations and refusing to cede Chablais and Faucigny to the Swiss. Is it that, from a too indiscriminate indulgence in fiction, he has lost his taste for probability? Or does he merely desire to add the pleasure of openly trampling on the laws of veracity to the pleasure of openly trampling on the laws of justice? We are reminded of the quibble about the rule of succession to property in Brabant which LOUIS XIV. threw in the face of Spain, when, in defiance of all the decencies of rapine, he seized the Spanish Netherlands. The language of LOUIS XIV. in those days was the arrogant language of a great bully feeling himself very strong. Towards the end of his reign, his language was somewhat humbler, and that of his successors was humbler still. Freedom from conscience is a source of tremendous power till the world becomes aware of it. Then it turns to a source of corresponding weakness.

It will be observed that, so far as LOUIS NAPOLEON is concerned, the annexation of Savoy to France, as it was the main object, so it would have been the main result of the war in Italy. By the Treaty of Villafranca, Tuscany, Parma, and Modena would again have become Austrian Grand Duchies. The Austrian armies would then, upon the first occasion, have rushed back from the Quadrilateral over the defenceless plains of Lombardy like the tide of the sea returning over a flat. They would have returned, not only to reconquer, but to punish, and the latter state of Italy would have been ten times worse than her first. The Italian patriots, called forth by frothy manifestoes to fight by the side of the French EMPEROR for his idea, would have found the idea realized for him in the acquisition of a new province, and for them in the *carcere duro* and the scaffold. Other "oppressed nationalities" may learn from their example that the fable of the horse and the stag, however trite, is true, and that to call in foreign arms, if it seems the shortest, is not the surest road to emancipation. The disinterested love of other people's liberty is not very common in the political world, and it could scarcely be expected to glow with peculiar fervour in the ruler who peoples with victims Lambessa and Cayenna. Fortunately, things have taken a turn very

different from that prescribed by the fiat of Villafranca. The Italians, so long supposed incapable of sustained and united effort, have displayed qualities in the hour of need which have for ever won their freedom and fixed the admiration of the world. Under the utmost pressure of French influence, with the terror of Austrian vengeance in the background, they have refused to return to the delegated dominion of Austria, or to become a satrapy of France. This is the theme for poets to celebrate, if poets want a political theme. This it is which will make the Italian war, on the whole, in spite of the infamies with which it has closed, a bright episode in history. The friends of liberty can scarcely find time to deplore the loss of Savoy or reflect on the danger of Switzerland for joy that a free Italian nation is born into the world.

It would be rather a metaphysical curiosity to inquire exactly in what pickle our Ministers are left. They have gratuitously taken blackness to their bosom, and we cannot conscientiously say they are the whiter for the embrace. The Commercial Treaty was one which, under any circumstances, they had better not have made. The advantage conceded by it to France was certain to be construed by that nation, like every other concession, not as the gift of magnanimity, but as the tribute of fear. It would not unreasonably be so construed at a time when the very Government that offers it is calling on the nation in whose name it is offered to pay large sums and form volunteer corps as a protection against French aggression. France has armed to the teeth to attack or menace her neighbours, and we, in common with other nations, are arming on our side that we may set her attacks at defiance and give her menaces to the wind. This state of things is not consistent with flirtation, as we hope by this time even the PREMIER is aware. Happily, while the flirtation has been going on, the rifle has not been neglected. The country has no fault to find with the present Government on that score. Neither do we doubt for a moment that the announcement of Lord JOHN RUSSELL was deliberate and sincere, and that a course of policy is now to be entered on which, without involving any intrigues against the natural greatness and influence of France, or any insults to her honour, shall put bounds at once to her delirious ambition. It is late, no doubt, to enter on this course when Russia, by a master-stroke of infamous policy, has been completely estranged from the European community—when Austria is alienated and sulky—and when the commercial interests of this country have been compromised by the Commercial Treaty. But Prussia and the rest of Germany still remain true to the cause of nations, with indelible memories of former French occupation burnt into their very soul. There still remains Switzerland, not unmindful of Granson and Morat, nor incapable, with her free population of riflemen, of making the master of 700,000 conscripts feel the difference between fighting against a wooden army of mercenaries and fighting against an injured nation. Lord PALMERSTON has paid his court at Compiègne, as his rival has more recently paid his court at Plombières; but at least he is an English gentleman, and we may hope that he knows how to make the betrayers of his confidence feel that they have broken the laws of honour.

The error of Ministers in trusting LOUIS NAPOLEON thus far would be inconceivable, had it not been almost universal. The few who have been preserved from it throughout have been preserved, not by any superior political sagacity, but by simple faith in the commonest laws of human nature and the commonest rules of honour. They shrunk from the contact of a convicted criminal in public as they would in private affairs, and refused to believe that a life spent in conspiracy could produce any character but that of an inveterate conspirator. The success of this adventurer in his own country is only too easily accounted for. His success in England is not so easily accounted for, and to analyse its causes will be at once the most curious and the most melancholy task of the historian of these times. It must be remembered that his success has not been political only, but moral. He has triumphed over the honour of our nation, or at least of our upper classes, as well as over the skill of our diplomatists. Not only has he drawn us into a war with Russia for his interest, estranged Austria, annexed Savoy—he has seen the leaders of both parties in the House of Commons among his courtiers; he has gone in triumph through the streets of London; he has figured as the most honoured guest of the English Sovereign; he has hung up his banner and set his escutcheon beside the banner and escutcheon of the Black Prince, and he wears the Garter on his knee. National morality enfeebled by sentimentalism, national

honour corrupted by staggering and stock-jobbing, jaded luxury welcoming a new sensation, effeminacy craving for something strong, and taking violence for strength—these may, perhaps, be reckoned among the causes of this great backsliding of the English nation. The success of swindling speculators and political sharpers heralded the success of the great *Chevalier d'Industrie* of all. Our sincere desire to find a cordial ally in France, and our honest hatred of the hypocritical ambition of the late Emperor of RUSSIA, must also, in fairness, be allowed to have contributed to the delusion, and to have redeemed the fault. But let all this pass for the present. Now, at all events, we are all of one mind; and as the Government cannot at present be changed for the better, there is nothing for us but to support it vigorously in its difficulties, and to show that, though England is not a centralized despotism, she can, in face of the public enemy, be a united nation.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE INCOME-TAX.

AFTER indulging itself abundantly in fiscal relaxations on paper, on wine, and on French manufactures, the House of Commons consistently paid the bill which had been run up with an indifference worthy of its previous liberality. An income-tax of 10*d.* in the pound represents an item of nearly eleven millions in the national revenue, and no mean amount of hardship or inconvenience to individual taxpayers. A penny—or a million—was the price of paper which is not even certain to be cheapened, and twopence more furnished an equivalent for cheaper wine, silks, and lace, with the additional advantage of a guaranteed friendship with France which has barely lasted a fortnight. The remaining sevenpence would have been accepted as an inevitable permanent evil if Mr. GLADSTONE had not incessantly announced the necessity of repealing the tax in the year which has given him the opportunity of increasing it by five-and-forty per cent. Three millions, constituting the cost of the French Treaty and of the repealed excise on paper, could not be refused by a House which had already approved of the proposed changes; and Mr. GLADSTONE simply stated that there was a deficit of corresponding extent, which could only be met by an Income-tax of ten or eleven millions. The objection that the same engineer who called for a supply of fascines had himself immediately before dug the ditch which he was now proposing to fill up, would not have been new, while it would have been practically useless. No alternative resource could have been devised unless some obstinate member had recommended the reimposition of the very taxes which had, without obvious necessity, been immediately before taken off. Future Chancellors of the Exchequer will have every temptation to resort, whenever necessity impels them, to that unfailing and easily applied remedy of another penny or two in the pound; and the deficit of twelve millions which Mr. GLADSTONE has so thoughtfully provided as a test of financial ability for the new Parliament will probably be met by the ready change of tenpence into a shilling, which was pointed out as admirably convenient and symmetrical in the first exposition of the Budget.

If the exchequer continues to flourish under its present auspices, there seems to be no reason why the owners of property should not contribute still more freely to the public necessities. In the fear that the enfranchised six-pounders will sympathize too acutely with the burdens imposed on the richer classes, Mr. GLADSTONE holds out to recipients of moderate incomes a prospect of total or partial exemption from the tax which has provided the means of relieving them from a large portion of their former liabilities. The respectable part of the constituencies is to be deliberately bribed into co-operation with the untaxed, and therefore unscrupulous multitude. The thriving tradesman with moderate means, the flourishing artisan of Sheffield or Bradford, might offer some resistance to public extravagance and extortion if he continued to pay his fair proportion to the public revenue. When the lightly-burdened traveller shares the immunity of the penniless wanderer, he also will be ready to sing while the thief rifles his neighbour's baggage. Mr. GLADSTONE has not thought it worth while to offer the smallest reason for a concession which is diametrically opposed to justice, to sound principle, and, last and not least, to his own former practice. The very Minister who, with the full assent of all competent authorities, extended the tax downwards from incomes of 150*l.* to those of 100*l.*, now proposes to reverse the process at the same

time that he is increasing the pressure on property, and diminishing, in conjunction with his colleagues, the political power which forms its principal defence. It may be said with perfect truth that Mr. GLADSTONE's wild doctrines and imprudent language have, since the beginning of the session, caused far more alarm than any of Mr. BRIGHT's violent harangues. The eccentricities of the cashier who keeps the key of the safe are more formidable than the conduct of the suspicious character who has been observed outside the door.

In the short debates which have been thought sufficient for the most important provision of the Budget, two or three speakers have offered hesitating suggestions of schemes for the readjustment of the Income-tax. If the champions of Schedule D had understood the strength of their own case, they might have pointed out the injustice which an irregular rate of taxation inflicts on incomes of precarious tenure. The plain arithmetical doctrine that a permanent tax corrects its own seeming inequalities is more generally understood than in the earlier periods of the discussion. It follows, on the same principle, that an additional percentage, imposed for a limited time, falls with oppressive weight on an income which may not survive to recover the loss. Mr. DISRAELI and Mr. GLADSTONE have amused themselves for two or three years by introducing almost every possible variety into the rate of taxation; and so far they have provided a plausible excuse for that dangerous distinction of classes which Mr. BRIGHT and many less extravagant fiscal reformers have long desired to establish. If profits and earnings had once received a total or partial exemption, it would be almost impossible to restore a just, equal, and permanent tax on property as denoted by income. When the subject-matter of taxation was once graduated both as to quantity and according to quality, the professional and trading classes would be scarcely more interested than the new constituencies in limiting the demands of the tax-gatherer. The ominous silence or encouraging hints of the Minister who has announced his intention of favouring small incomes will not fail to stimulate democratic assaults on the practice of equal and indiscriminate taxation.

It is remarkable that Mr. GLADSTONE, who thoroughly understands the fallacy of the demand for graduation, has carefully abstained from intimating dissent when attacks have been made on the existing form of Income-tax. It would have been easy for the ablest speaker in the House to point out the injustice which would arise from allowing a deduction in two different forms to those incomes which are called precarious. It is the business of a financier to deal impartially with rich and poor, instead of attempting to correct the inequalities of fortune. The extraction of the same percentage leaves A and D in the enjoyment of their relative original position. The statesman who deliberately gives trade an advantage at the expense of land performs the function of a censor or a socialist, and not of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. GLADSTONE has not yet exchanged political economy and plain justice for the transcendental attempt to award to every class its own moral deserts, but to every proposal for an arbitrary assessment he has replied that it would be difficult, and he has left it to be inferred that graduation would be equitable if only it were practicable. The malcontents have been repeatedly invited to propose an inquiry to which the Government have been gratuitously pledged to offer no opposition. Mr. GLADSTONE himself modestly declares that he is not yet equal to a task which must therefore be supposed beneficial and honourable. It is surprising that his challenge has not been accepted on the plea that a partial approximation to right would be better than an acknowledged wrong.

Perhaps, however, the partisans of change and spoliation understand their own business. The jockey knows that it is unwise to urge a willing horse, and the advocate relaxes in the impetuosity of his eloquence when he perceives that the Court is on his side. The understanding between Mr. GLADSTONE and the supporters of Mr. BRIGHT has been renewed and strengthened by the French Treaty, by the repeal of the Paper duty, and by the comparisons which have been drawn between direct and indirect taxation. The same adroit intellect which devised reasons for preferring the claims of wine to those of tea and sugar may hereafter succeed in unravelling the web of demonstration which it wove in 1853. The adjustment which once was iniquitous has now become only complicated, and it is easy to foresee that it will not long remain impracticable.

HISTORICAL ALLIES.

FOR the last two centuries France has been the foremost State on the Continent; and as, during the greater part of this long period she has been under different kinds of despotism, all agreeing in a tendency to make external wars supersede liberty at home, England has found herself under a general necessity to combine with the other neighbours of France to keep French despotism in check. While France was under a constitutional Government this necessity was suspended; and as, at the time when her Government was constitutional, the Governments of the other great Continental States were extravagantly despotic, England and France were bound together, not only by their political sympathies, but by their occupying a common ground of antagonism to other Powers. When the French Empire was restored, in 1852, the best judges of its future prophesied that its existence would break up the alliance between the two countries. French despotism must be aggressive. The activity which it stifles at home must have a vent abroad. The prophecy has now been realized. For the moment, we may put aside all questions of the character of the EMPEROR, of his truthfulness, and of his secret wishes to benefit or injure England. Those who take the most favourable view of his conduct concur with his bitterest enemies in thinking that he has shown his despotism to be as aggressive as history shows French despotism always to have been. The wheel of events has therefore come round again. Neither France nor England is as eager for war as both countries used to be. We know that we can harm each other in a great many new and terrible ways. We know that a war between the two chief States of modern Europe will go far to dissipate the fruits of a half century of peace, and cause the greatest amount of misery to mankind that any war could cause. It is no fault of England that modern history should have to repeat itself. We should be exceedingly pleased if France would profit by the lessons of the past, and be content with what she has got. But France has chosen to have a despotism; and that a French despotism, to be strong, must be aggressive, is one of those plain facts to which we can no more shut our eyes than to the fact that commerce enriches and war pauperizes the world. As France renews her old policy, we are obliged to renew our old policy. We do not want to be leaguings with Germany against France. If Prussia is an ally to whom we can have no objection, the mistress of Venetia and Hungary is by no means the companion in arms that we most desire. But this Savoy business has made it perfectly clear that, unless we take care, there will first be a German war, with a new Magenta on the Rhine and a new Solferino on the Danube, and then an English war, in which France will be virtually able to bring the whole resources of all Europe, except Russia, to bear against us. What would happen if Russia were also to turn against us we do not now pretend to guess. But putting all thoughts of Russia aside, history and common sense alike tell us that it would be much cheaper and better for Germany and England to have their French wars at the same time. However confident we may be of our powers of resistance, we cannot deny that it would be a considerable advantage to us to have half-a-million of armed friends occupying the attention of France on her eastern frontier. No calculation can be simpler. By his conduct in the annexation of Savoy, LOUIS NAPOLEON has proved his despotism to be what history tells us French despotism has always been. Germany and England may expect to be successively attacked. The only way to prevent this attack, or to repel it if made, is for those who are threatened to combine.

We do not at all pretend to overrate the importance of Germany as an ally, nor to deny the great difficulty of persuading ourselves to fight on the same side with Austria. If LOUIS NAPOLEON would but attack Prussia directly, enter Cologne, and lay siege to Ehrenbreitstein, England would declare war within a week. But Germany has a much more vulnerable side, and it is there she and we are likely to be attacked. The great revolutionary chief of Europe holds in his hands the threads of a Hungarian revolution, and counts on his power of sending the Italians at any moment to fight for the rescue of Venetia. The sympathies of England are very strongly with the Venetians and the Hungarians. If the trick is done adroitly, we shall scarcely bring ourselves to believe that the destruction of the Quadrilateral is not the most desirable thing that could happen. Prussia will move to defend Austria, but until the

Rhine is menaced we shall be very unwilling to stir. And yet, before a French soldier crosses the Rhine, Germany may be seriously crippled. It is useless to think that we can avert the danger by getting Austria to make concessions that would pacify her subjects. She has only one way of ruling, and we cannot teach her another. Our hopes lie much more in Italy than in Austria. There is a possibility that the Italian Cabinet and Parliament may be brought to see that, if Italy accepts French aid in order to drive the Austrians out of Venice, success will carry with it utter ruin to Italian liberty. If Germany is too completely worsted in a contest with France, the Court of Turin will have simply to record the edicts of the Court of the Tuileries. There was truth in what Mr. BRIGHT said, that Italy may at least have the satisfaction of thinking that France has been paid for her trouble. Savoy has wiped out the debt of gratitude. And it is now open to the Italians to be as independent of LOUIS NAPOLEON as any of the trembling neighbours of France can pretend to be. But if Italy were to make herself the tool of France in overthrowing Germany, she would be called on to pay for Venice if Venice were given up to her. She would have to obey a master who had no longer any opposition on the Continent to fear. Count CAVOUR is quite enough of a statesman to comprehend this, and England has done quite enough for Italy to secure a respectful attention to her counsels when she points out the snare into which Italy is in hazard of falling.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL, in saying that henceforth England, while maintaining friendly relations with France, will take care that she is not separated from the other Powers interested in preserving the present settlement of Europe, said exactly what accords with the general opinions and wishes of the country. There is not the slightest disposition to bully France, or insult her, or menace her with a European coalition. If only she and her EMPEROR would keep quiet, we should have the greatest pleasure in keeping quiet also. But the time is come when we must let France and Europe know what we mean. What we really mean is—or, if we do not mean this, we mean nothing—that if the Rhine is threatened we will fight. It is not to be expected that a Minister should express this in so many words. He does enough when he says that, if future questions arise, we shall state our views moderately but firmly. Nor is it at all necessary that public meetings should be held or public speeches made to defy France. In a much quieter way, without giving offence to any one, without parade or gasconading, we can let all the world understand that an attack on Prussia means war with England. This is the only way to avoid war. Let the EMPEROR quite understand that we do not wish him to take his neighbours in detail, and that, if he wants to keep his armies employed, he must embark in a general war. That he really wishes to face a coalition of England and Germany we do not believe. On the contrary, there is every reason to suppose that he will do all in his power to maintain peace if he finds us thwarting his favourite policy of taking his adversaries in succession. What Europe pines for is the restoration of confidence. That this restoration of confidence can come from Imperial France is plainly impossible. No one pays the slightest attention to the most solemn declarations of the French Government; and so long as England allows France to work confusion and mischief at her will, Europe cannot feel safe for an instant. But confidence may be restored if Germany can reckon on the armed support of England, and if Italy can be withheld from acting as the catspaw of LOUIS NAPOLEON. It is the business of diplomacy to effect this double object without wounding the pride of the French nation, and yet without concealing the conviction that, if France renews her traditions of aggression, England and Central Europe must renew their traditions of active alliance.

MANCHESTER SYMPATHIES.

IT is satisfactory to reflect that the Manchester gentlemen were not always eager to buy peace at any price, nor quite ready to bear any amount of moral torture rather than endanger the smallest material interest. Persons who can recall the politics of fourteen or fifteen years since will remember that Mr. COBDEN himself, when in opposition to the PEEL Government, was not ashamed to sneer at Lord ASHBURTON's Treaty for the settlement of the boundary between Canada and the United States. Mr. COBDEN's speech was a very factious one, and the Treaty was one of

the most equitable which this country ever concluded; but it re-establishes one's faith in the permanent characteristics of human nature to find that a Manchester gentleman was once able to join in the clamour against an arrangement which was popularly, though erroneously, supposed to have surrendered too much to the exorbitant demands of a blustering adversary. A second proof that Mr. COBDEN, like other men, has his tender points, was furnished by his activity as gentleman-usher to M. KOSSUTH. Who does not recollect when Mr. COBDEN was the most furious anti-Austrian in England, protesting, indeed, occasionally against intervention, but refuting his protest by placing all the resources of a practised agitator at the disposal of the eloquent exile? This was a very serious business. For the Crimean war the Manchester gentlemen were somewhat remotely answerable, through having inspired the Emperor NICHOLAS, who thought himself a keen observer of foreign countries, with the firm belief that England would fight under no temptation and under no provocation. But Mr. COBDEN has a more direct responsibility for the events of 1854, through the effect produced by his recommendation of M. KOSSUTH. Nobody who carefully watched the growth of public opinion in England has a doubt that it was the intervention in Hungary which brought to a head the smouldering irritation against Russia, which the Czar's ostentatious patronage of the anti-Constitutional cause throughout Europe had been long fomenting. The progress of M. KOSSUTH through England and Scotland, under Mr. COBDEN's auspices, not only increased the general anger, but carried it into classes of the population which, before the Crimean war, had no sort of interest in the politics of the Continent. The feeble assurance that all this must not be understood to commit us to foreign intervention had not the slightest share in modifying the inference which was directly suggested by the marvellously eloquent addresses of Mr. COBDEN's friend.

We are not aware that Mr. BRIGHT has ever attacked a treaty or given a testimonial to a refugee; but it may be suspected that, if the House of Lords were only suppressed, the Established Church disendowed, the law of primogeniture repealed, and Lord PALMERSTON gathered to his fathers, no voice would be raised so loudly or so constantly as his would be on questions of foreign politics. In spite of "Perish Savoy," and panegyrics on social freedom, we know no man so likely to go into unreasonable ecstasies of indignation at the most apocryphal tales of kingly aggression, provided only the more immediate objects of his hatred were removed. His long course of invective against the Government of India makes it impossible to doubt this. It is true that it is difficult to understand the amount of knowledge he brought to the subject. Mr. BRIGHT uniformly spoke of the "people of India" as if they were a mass of well-to-do British shopkeepers, with a turn for Dissent and a horror of class distinctions, while the unfortunate East India Directors at home, and the unlucky Civil servants in India—who now turn out to have been the sole protectors of the Hindoo against the violence of the men of Mr. BRIGHT's order who have settled in the East—were systematically denounced as the two branches of a covetous and bloodthirsty oligarchy. But this active, if ill-informed sympathy for the personage whom a British merchant from Calcutta always designates a "pumpared nigger" proves at least that there is sensitiveness, perhaps undue sensitiveness, beneath Mr. BRIGHT's waistcoat. Why, then, are the nerves which are wrung by a story of suffering from Allahabad or Lucknow to be as firm as a rock when they are appealed to by betrayed patriotism at Paris or trodden-down intelligence at Naples? "Because we are all Englishmen," said Mr. BRIGHT, on Monday night, "and because there is no direct and immediate interest at stake." To which we may reply, that people who pride themselves on dissipating the illusions of sentiment by coarse and downright common sense will generally be found to be simply leaning with all their weight on some fiction or assumption which becomes untenable when pressed too far. If Mr. BRIGHT's true nature were reflected (which it is not) in his recent speeches, the assertion that we are all Englishmen would be an unmeaning form of words in his mouth, for the nationality which unites him with the great body of his countrymen is a laxer and slighter bond than the sympathies on a hundred subjects which unite the great body of his countrymen with their contemporaries in foreign nations. Nine out of every ten of us are more foreign than English, if Mr. BRIGHT, as he has lately shown himself, is the type of an Englishman.

Nine out of every ten of us have a more "direct and immediate interest" in Savoy than in half the questions which Mr. BRIGHT supposes us to be exclusively concerned with.

It is not just now our object to contend against the cynical paradoxes in which Mr. BRIGHT chooses to express his disrelish for a disagreement with the Emperor of the FRENCH. But, while we leave alone his arguments against English needlesomeness, and his proofs of the unvarying equity of France, we must not pass unrebuked what seems to us a singularly "mean and cruel" passage in his speech of Monday. The insinuation that the Princes of the House of ORLEANS have some part of the English press in their pay has a peculiar ring about it which almost justifies us in tracing its origin to an august interlocutor in the conversations with Mr. COBDEN. That it is not of native British growth is pretty conclusively proved by Mr. BRIGHT's own language; for he acquits all the English newspapers of improper violence on the score of Savoy, except only the *Morning Advertiser*, which cannot be suspected of exactly rejoicing in princely patronage. The person who perhaps started this notion on the course which ultimately carried it to Mr. BRIGHT's ears is known to have a frank confidence in corruption which accounts for his belief that it is occasionally resorted to by his enemies; but, in justice to Mr. COBDEN's innocence, he ought to have added that he had made himself quite safe against being attacked by literary stipendiaries of the ORLEANS family. The press, we suppose, cannot be corrupted without money; and the Emperor of the FRENCH has got the money of the ORLEANS Princes in his own pocket. We prefer the course of reminding our readers that the family of LOUIS PHILIPPE has been reduced by an Imperial confiscation to what, for persons of their rank, is penury, to that of affecting indignation at the hint that an English newspaper can be bribed. There is at least one—perhaps there are two—daily journals published in London whose support somebody or other in France has the simplicity to consider worth purchasing. Mr. BRIGHT, if he ever reads them, will not be likely to trace in their columns the influence of the House of ORLEANS.

PERSONAL CONFIDENCES.

IN Mr. Payne Collier's Reply to Mr. Hamilton there is a foot-note, in which—having had occasion to mention the late Duke of Devonshire in the text—he tells us that whenever he studied in the Duke's library about lunch-time, the Duke personally brought him a glass of sherry and a biscuit. There is not the least approach to snobbishness or toadying in the manner in which Mr. Collier relates the incident. He merely relates it as a piece of personal biography which might be expected to interest the public, and which might hereafter be very appropriately introduced in the narrative either of his life or of the Duke's. There is no knowing whose life may be written, and if a life is to be written, the greater the number of these personal confidences the better. What would not the literary world give to know that Lord Marchmont handed Pope a glass of wine, and to have some clue to the feelings with which the civility was received? To tell little things about himself in print is one of the most fashionable amusements a man can have. The public think that perhaps the statement may somehow be important, and that at any rate it is a bit of gossip. There is nothing dry or abstract about the information that the Duke handed Mr. Collier the sherry, and every one can take it in. The greatest assiduity is displayed by the curious in hunting up little pieces of intelligence about eminent living authors. If an historian has a house in the suburbs, or a poet a cottage by the sea, there are sure to be daily gangs of visitors in fine weather who will hang about the gate and watch the comings-in and goings-out of every member of the eminent man's family. The notion that to know trifles about a man is to know the man himself has been so sedulously inculcated by critics and biographers that great enthusiasm has been awakened in the vulgar mind to join in the collection of literary materials. Much trouble, however, will be saved if the authors themselves put their personal confidences on paper, and let us pick up the story of their lives from what they themselves tell us.

A book, called the *Recreations of a Country Parson*, has been recently published, which is entirely based on the value of personal confidences. The writer is a very amiable and lively person, and has something to say about many of the little events of daily life which, if rather superficial, is very harmless, and sometimes instructive. He has also a cheerful philosophy and a spirit of goodwill that are sure to win him the favour of most readers. He has, however, a theory that his thoughts cannot possibly be understood unless he sets out how he came to think them. He wants the reader to know how it happened that he selected the subject on which he is writing, and under what circumstances he is composing. He urges that this throws great light on what he means, for it is not probable that he would have any thoughts at all unless they were suggested to him; and, as the

thoughts are thus the reflection of his external circumstances, his readers, if they care about him at all, must care to know how he is situated at the moment of composition. His book consists of a series of essays, and each essay is heralded by a preface, which, as it were, lets the reader into the secret of the essay being written. Nothing can be more frank and full than these confessions. The first essay is on a Country Parson's Life. It begins by telling us that it is Monday morning in July, that the author is sitting on the steps that lead to his door, that he is somewhat tired by the Sunday's duty, but feels "very restful and thankful." After a paragraph or two, he proceeds to inform us that he has been sitting for an hour, but that he has not been able to think very connectedly, for his little girl has been making him run a race. The next essay is on the "Art of Putting Things," and here the preface must be accepted in a spirit of faith. The circumstances under which the subject of the essay occurred to the author are minutely and graphically told. It was a winter's day—he took a walk—there was a pine wood, a riverside, hills, uplands, meadows. At last he leant upon a gate and looked into a field. Something was grazing in the field, but he cannot remember what. Suddenly, he determined to write on the Art of Putting Things. If his thoughts on that art were only to be understood by tracing the connexion between them and his attitude at the gate, they would be hopelessly dark. Fortunately, they are perfectly intelligible, and, for the most part, obvious without this clue to them. The third essay begins by the author asking the reader to guess on what he is resting his writing-board while he writes. The next sentence answers the riddle. The writer is writing on the nose of his favourite horse. He proceeds to explain that this horse is not likely to bite him, that it can go twelve miles an hour, and that while going that pace it is fulfilling the end for which the Creator intended it. This is supposed to be a suggestive introduction to an essay on the "Blisters of Humanity." But how? The connexion is managed by the writer continuing—"Into this paragraph has my pencil, of its own accord, wandered, though it was taken up to write about something else."

The fact evidently is, that it is all moonshine about the author thinking his personal confidences have anything to do with his essays. The only use they are of is to prevent our thinking him too wise, and it is always an object of rational desire with essay writers to do away with the prejudice that exists against their supposed assumption of superiority. These personal confidences are never honest enough to throw any real light on the thoughts of the writer, even if it were of the smallest importance to know what it is that has suggested his thoughts. To put down all the little things that go to make a particular thought take a particular shape would be as endless as it would be absurd. The author repudiates the obvious explanation of all these prefaces about his leaning over a gate, and his horse's nose, and his sensations on Monday morning. It has been hinted that he inserts all this surplusage in order to fill up his space and make his article longer. This he indignantly denies. Very probably he is right, and this only enters in a very slight degree into his motives. The truth is that he and his readers like gossip. It requires some exertion of mind to treat the Art of Putting Things, and to examine and weigh what is written on such a subject. But it does not require the slightest exertion of mind to write or read a description of the author's children, dogs, and horses. These descriptions, in order to be interesting, must be minute, and stamped with the impress of reality. They are then sure to take. It is quite safe for any author to calculate on the curiosity of the world to know the details of other men's family life. If he can otherwise inspire respect or command attention, so much the better. It is thought delightful to know the household history of the most stupid and commonplace people, but it is doubly delightful to know what a person who can think and write has for dinner, or wears when there is no company to make him dress smart. If the author is not only respectable, but celebrated, there is no saying how great his success might be if he were to bring his personal confidences into the market. If Mr. Tennyson were to publish a new poem, with foot-notes, detailing the civilities he has received from Royal and noble personages, or if Mr. Thackeray would but publish a number of the *Cornhill Magazine* telling us how he feels on the first of each month—which is, in a manner, his Monday morning—and whether he writes on the nose of a horse or other animal, and what sort of waistcoat he considers best suits him, all successful literary sales hitherto known would be as nothing to the gigantic sale of those confidential communications.

When society was constructed on a smaller scale than it is now, when very decent people lived in country towns, and everybody knew everybody, there was always plenty of gossip and scandal to be had. There were old ladies of both sexes who kindly devoted their abundant leisure to watching, reporting on, and exaggerating everything that went on. The breaking-up of the society to which these purveyors of intelligence belonged has diminished their numbers and their influence. But the thirst for a knowledge of other people's manner of life still remains unquenched in the human breast, and it insists on being satisfied. It gets satisfaction in the oddest ways, and it is almost touching to notice how heartily thankful every one is to those who minister to the wish for personal anecdotes. Sometimes a skilful preacher will introduce an anecdote of this sort into his sermon. He illustrates his doctrine by a fragment of his own

personal experience. Instantly the congregation seems to breathe a new life. The coughing is suddenly hushed; meditative heads are raised from the edges of pews; and a pin might be heard to drop during the pause which the orator, if he is wise, interposes between exciting and gratifying the pious curiosity of his hearers. The story is told, and the doctrinal exposition is once more resumed. Instantly the pent-up coughing again sounds like rock echoing to rock, and the meditative heads sink again into the attitude of meditation. It is exactly the same with personal confidences in literature. Many readers who do not quite see what the essayist is after in talking about the blisters of humanity will feel on perfectly sure ground when he is describing how fond his horse is of carrots, and how his little girl makes him run races. It is very unfair to confound these confidences with egotism. The author does not make much of himself, or arrange his domestic facts so as to magnify his own glory. He merely tells idle little things about himself for idle people to read. The market demands personal confidences; and if he can feed, without glutting, the market, by resting his writing-paper on his horse's nose, and then by telling all about the writing-paper and the horse's nose, why should he not do it? We do not pretend to say that we do not think more highly of a more reserved man, and it appears to us rather unnecessary to pretend that the personal confidences are a key to the thoughts contained in the essays; but they are innocent reading, and to many persons they are pleasant reading. This is quite defence enough, without tacking them on to the tail of an untenable theory.

THE DERBYSHIRE WILL CASE.

A TRIAL took place last week at the Derby Assizes, which the presiding judge—the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer—declared to be one of the most important and interesting with which he had ever been connected. The question at issue was, whether certain documents purporting to be codicils to the will of a Mr. George Nuttall, of Matlock, were or were not genuine; and the jury, by their verdict, found that they were not. They were led to this conclusion by a chain of evidence which was perhaps as singular as any that was ever submitted to the consideration of a jury, and which can hardly fail to have much interest for every one who has ever made judicial investigations a subject of study.

Mr. Nuttall was a land surveyor, and accumulated in the course of his business a considerable property, which, at the time of his death, was 1200*l.* a-year in land, besides 10,000*l.* in personal estate. He was unmarried and lived alone, the only inmates of his house being a housekeeper, one Catherine Marsden, and one or two inferior servants. More than twenty years before his death, which took place in March, 1856, he took into his service a lad of the name of John Else, who was then about fifteen years of age, and who continued for the rest of his life in his service, first as a clerk, and afterwards as a sort of assistant. Else was a cousin of Marsden's, and married her sister, with whom he lived in a small house which was Nuttall's property, and was situated at no great distance from his house. As might have been expected of a man in his circumstances, the great subject by which Nuttall's mind was occupied was his property; and his attorney—a Mr. Newbold—stated, that in the course of three years he prepared for him three draft wills, besides a fourth which he undoubtedly executed in duplicate in September, 1854. Shortly before his death, in March, 1856, he used language to Mr. Newbold, implying an intention to make an alteration in the disposition of his property; and in his last illness he made repeated efforts, in the presence of several witnesses, to get at a cupboard in his bedroom, in which his will was afterwards found, but was unable, from weakness, either to explain his wishes or, when he had reached the cupboard to open the word-lock by which it was fastened. The cupboard was broken open upon his death and the will was found. It divided the real estate amongst several persons—the principal shares falling to Mrs. Blackshaw, the testator's natural child, a Mrs. Sheldon, and Mr. John Nuttall, a distant cousin, who was residuary devisee. The personal property was divided between no less than thirty-six legatees. Some leasehold tithes in Cheshire were left to Else, but the house in which he lived was left to Catherine Marsden for her life, and after her death to John Nuttall.

A week after the testator's death, and on the day of his funeral, one of his executors, a Mr. Marriott, found the duplicate will which had been executed at the same time as the other. It differed from it in having two interlineations, one of which left 100*l.* a year to Else, whilst it was endorsed, "This is my *right* (*sic*) will." About a month after Mr. Nuttall's death, the residuary legatee, Mr. John Nuttall, died; and, a day or two afterwards, Mr. Else found, amongst a basket of papers which it was said had been taken from the testator's house to his by the desire of Mr. John Nuttall, a gummed envelope directed to the testator. Upon being opened by the executor, it was found to contain a codicil by which several of the devisees in the will were revoked, and the property to which they related was left to Else and to his sister-in-law, Catherine Marsden. Mr. Newbold, the attorney, was to receive 50*l.* a year out of the property left to Else; whilst property was also left to his son, Mr. T. Newbold. This codicil professed to be dated on the 27th October, 1855, and to be witnessed by two labouring men, Gregory and Buxton. The codicil was folded up in an epitome of the first will, the first part of

which was allowed to be genuine, whilst the second part, which contained references to the codicils, was said, on behalf of those who disputed their authenticity, to be forged. In the latter part of 1856, Elze, who had succeeded Nuttall as highway surveyor, applied to Mr. Newbold for a memorandum book of Nuttall's relating to the surveyor's business, which, with other papers, had remained in Mr. Newbold's possession. A number of books and papers were shown to him, and he chose the one he wanted and put it aside. Mr. Newbold asked him to stay to dinner, and, as he was leaving the room, called his attention to the book which he was leaving behind him. Mr. Thomas Newbold then took the book to give it to Elze, and found in it a paper, which turned out to be a second codicil, dated on the 6th January 1856, and giving still further advantages to Elze—devising to him, amongst the rest, the house in which Nuttall had lived. The property was, indeed, charged with two life annuities, but the annuitants had died between the date of the codicil and its discovery. In October, 1857, Elze discovered a third codicil, by which nearly all the remainder of the property was left either to himself or to Marsden, something being given to John Nuttall at the expense of the other devisees. This codicil was found under very strange circumstances. Elze desired a boy to clean a window in an old room by a hayloft, and, in order to help him, laid hold of the window-board, that he might get up and open the window. The window-board gave way and disclosed a space, in which was an old jar, which contained the third codicil and twenty sovereigns in a canvas bag. This codicil was dated January 12th, 1856, and, as well as the second, was attested by Mr. Adams, a surgeon of Matlock, of more than forty years' standing, and a Mr. Job Knowles, who was a friend of the testator's, and in the constant habit of seeing him. None of the codicils took any notice of the personal estate.

Upon these facts it was contended, on the one side, that, from the interlineation in the duplicate will down to the last codicil, a series of forgeries had been perpetrated, by which the property of the dead man was gradually appropriated, by several successive stages, principally to Elze, but partially, also, to Marsden. The principal evidence in favour of this supposition was the character of the will and codicils, and the circumstances under which they were discovered. Each disposition, it was said, was more favourable to Elze than the last. The interlineation in the duplicate will gave him 100*l.* a-year, and the three codicils—each of which he found himself in the order of their dates—gave him successively larger shares of the real estate until the last codicil boldly made him residuary devisee. The only exceptions were devises to the solicitors, Mr. Newbold and his son, and these, it was argued, were inserted for the purpose of disposing of them to uphold the codicils. It was also urged, with much ingenuity, that an annuity of 50*l.*, devised to a gentleman of substance and standing, was the sort of gift which would suggest itself as suitable to the mind of a cunning and low-minded forger rather than to that of a wealthy man who wished to acknowledge the professional services of a person with whom he had transacted business of a confidential kind for many years. It was also said that the circumstances of the discovery of the codicils were suspicious in the highest degree. The will was prepared with great care and elaborate forethought, was executed in duplicate, and was kept with the testator's other papers in a strong cupboard, which he wished to reach when he was dying. The codicils were found, one in an envelope, littering about amongst other papers, another in a memorandum-book, and a third in an old pickle-jar, hidden under a window-seat; and each was brought to light, in turn, by the person who was most interested in establishing their validity. The only explanation of this which was even suggested or attempted was that Nuttall was irresolute about the disposition of his property, and that he executed the codicils, and then put them away in out-of-the-way places because he could not make up his mind whether he should allow them to stand or not. This, however, seems a very far-fetched observation. It is conceivable that indecision should induce a man to put off making his will, but not that it should induce him to hide it when it is made. It was also a suspicious fact that, whilst the will distributed both the real and personal property, the codicils were confined to the realty alone. The suggestion upon this was that the forger knew that the personalty had been distributed amongst a large number of legatees, and felt that there would be no chance of recovering it; whereas the landed property would be more easily followed, especially as the representatives of the original residuary devisee were infants, represented by trustees who had no personal interest in the matter.

These circumstances—which were illustrated and connected by many smaller matters which, for the sake of brevity, may be passed over—certainly threw very great suspicion on the codicils, but the evidence against their genuineness was positive as well as circumstantial. Elze had been Nuttall's clerk from his boyhood upwards, and their handwritings were extremely similar, though Nuttall appears to have written several different hands, and Elze only one. This circumstance would of course give facilities for forgery, and might supply the first suggestion of it. There was a good deal of evidence—though, as always happens in such cases, it was very conflicting—as to whether the handwriting of the codicils and the interlineations was Elze's or Nuttall's, and this was to some extent helped out by supplementary evidence of a very singular nature. In all the codicils, and in the endorsement ("my right will") on the duplicate will, there were

mistakes in spelling, and it was contended that similar mistakes were found in letters and papers avowedly written by Elze, whereas Nuttall was a man of better education. This, however, was met by the production of a great number of words misspelt either through ignorance or negligence by Nuttall, and the general result of the rival attacks on the orthography of the two men appeared to be that certain tricks of Nuttall's appeared to balance not very disproportionately the ignorance of Elze. For example, in one of the codicils there appeared the word "doughter" for "daughter," and it was shown that Elze habitually wrote the word in that manner; but on the other hand Nuttall had a trick of writing *o* for *a* in cases where he could hardly have made a mistake—as for example, "lood" for "load." There was, however, ignorant as well as careless spelling in the codicils, and it seemed to be proved that Elze's spelling was, as a rule, far more ignorant than Nuttall's.

This was the case against the codicils, and it certainly was exceedingly suspicious. The case in favour of them, however, had strong points. Each of the codicils was attested by two witnesses—the first, by two labouring men, Gregory and Buxton, and the second and third, by a friend of Nuttall's, named Knowles, and the surgeon, Adams. Gregory and Buxton had been employed as labourers by Nuttall, and after his death made an affidavit that they had seen Nuttall sign the codicil (a fact which the attestation clause had omitted to notice). For some reason or other, they both denied at the trial that he had signed it in their presence, and swore to various attempts on the part of Elze to bribe them into saying that they had. They thus showed a strong wish to get rid of the codicil; but though they were obviously actuated by this motive, and imputed gross misconduct to Elze, they did not deny that their own signatures were genuine, though their evidence appeared to betray great anxiety to show that the codicil was void from irregularity. The suggestion made upon this was, that the codicil was in all probability valid, and that the witnesses (who admitted that Elze had lowered their wages), after setting up the codicil by their affidavit in the first instance, tried to invalidate it afterwards when they found that Elze was suspected of forgery. If the first codicil was genuine, that fact would of course greatly weaken the observations which arose upon the dispositions contained in the others, and upon the mode in which they were kept and found.

The attesting witnesses to the other two codicils swore most positively to their due execution, but one of them (Knowles), who was present when the will was found, failed to give any very satisfactory explanation of the circumstance that he had not mentioned the fact that there were codicils before they were discovered by Elze. This was the only particular in which their evidence was impeached, and no motive was either shown or suggested for imputing perjury and conspiracy to them. In answer to the argument arising from the disposition of the property, it was urged with great force that Nuttall had made three wills before 1854, and that he wanted to alter his will, whatever it was, just before his death; and stress was also laid upon the general consideration that there is no one thing in which people are so capricious and unaccountable as the disposition of their property. It is almost impossible to say what a lonely man with no near relations will do in the matter. The suspicion arising from the mode in which the codicils, especially the two last, were found, could neither be obviated or lessened.

The case supplies a most singular and perfect illustration of the balance which will sometimes exist between positive and circumstantial evidence, and of the extreme difficulty of deciding what appear at first sight to be the simplest matters of fact. It also suggests some reflections on the manner in which wills are made, which are not the less important because they are not very familiar. If the matter is considered in reference to general principles, there is no more curious power in the world than the right which people exercise by will of legislating after they are dead and gone, without restraint and without appeal; and it is perhaps even more singular that they exercise this power without being subject to any formalities whatever except the presence of two witnesses. To sell a house or a field is a matter which requires care and inquiry, and the circumstances ensure a certain degree of notoriety. But property of any amount may be disposed of in any way that caprice may dictate by an instrument which may be executed under any circumstances, and kept in any custody. No one but the testator need know its contents, and he may, and often does, prepare it with the most wanton caprice, and leave it in the most absurd depository to take its chance of loss or discovery as it may happen. It is well worth consideration whether the unlimited power which the law of England confers of making whatever wills a testator chooses ought not to be qualified by some special provisions as to the manner in which such wills should be made.

WHAT IS PAPER?

THE statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech, that the paper duty was "rapidly becoming untenable," has been supported by the Board of Inland Revenue, in a report which places in a strong light the difficulties of collecting that long assailed and now surrendered impost. These difficulties were attributable in a great measure to the condemnation of the duty by a Resolution of the House of Commons in 1858. It must not be forgotten that Mr. Disraeli, who was then

Chancellor of the Exchequer, allowed that Resolution to be unanimously adopted by the House. Arguments of very considerable weight are now urged in both Houses of Parliament and elsewhere against the present proposal for repealing this and other duties at a time when great and increasing demands for necessary expenditure have to be met by the Finance Minister. It may be hoped that one effect of these forcible arguments will be to teach the House of Commons to make, in future, a determined stand against proposals for condemning taxes before the time has come at which they may be prudently abolished. The difficulties which the circumstances of the year create for a Chancellor of the Exchequer are always quite sufficient, without the assistance either of his own ingenuity or of the impatience of Parliament in creating others.

The perplexities which surround this part of our revenue system, and which have been so strongly felt during the last two years, had been accumulating for a long time previously under the prevalence of a general impression that the duty would be given up on the first available opportunity. It was impossible, under these circumstances, to apply to Parliament for power to subject new branches of the trade to excise regulations; and at the same time it was unjust to allow to one branch of the trade an exemption from that duty and survey which alone prevented a rival branch from successful competition in the market. This observation is well illustrated by the comparison of card and pasteboard. These articles, says the Report, are "precisely similar in nature;" yet card-makers are exempt from survey, while pasteboard-makers are subject to it. To bring the card-makers under survey, an application must be made to Parliament, which probably would not be granted. Besides the hopelessness of any attempt to induce the House of Commons to assist in prolonging the vitality of a particular tax which it had pledged itself to destroy, the Board of Inland Revenue expresses its general belief that "it is impossible at the present day to subject to the supervision of the Exciseman any class of traders who have hitherto been free from it"—a declaration which, if well founded, will tend to narrow the limits within which speculative financiers must in future confine their theories. The card-makers, therefore, must have remained exempt, while the pasteboard-makers were kept under survey. It would be impracticable to relieve them, because their rivals, the paper-makers who make pasteboard at their mills, would immediately raise "loud and well-founded complaints," unless they also participated in the indulgence, or, in other words, unless the paper duty were abandoned without waiting for the action of the Legislature.

It is impossible not to commiserate this unhappy Board, thus pierced on all sides by the thin ends of wedges which have been skilfully inserted in it by manufacturers steadily pursuing their own interests during years of memorials and correspondence. We cannot but admire the ingenuity and resolution displayed both in attacking and defending the positions which have successively been carried by the advancing foe. The trade of making envelopes has grown to enormous dimensions during the last twenty years. They are now made both at the mills of the paper-makers and at the warehouses of the stationers. They are cut from rectangular pieces of paper, and at first the cuttings went to waste. But soon the paper-makers claimed the right to reconvert these cuttings into pulp before duty had been charged upon them. It was impossible to refuse this demand. Hereupon, the stationers, who found themselves at a disadvantage in the trade of envelope-making, required, with great apparent justice, that they should be allowed a drawback of the duty upon the waste cuttings. The Commissioners, however, made a stout resistance to this claim. They urged that, if it were conceded, they would next be asked to allow drawback on every scrap of paper to be found amid the sweepings of a stationer's shop. Nevertheless, they had to yield the point at last. At present, the waste cuttings of the stationers are reconverted into pulp at a mill under the superintendence of an officer, and drawback is then allowed upon them. The employment of officers for such a purpose, however necessary, must be troublesome, and can scarcely be made remunerative. Instances exist where, for the sake of uniformity of system and of guarding against frauds, duty is levied to such trifling amounts that the revenue actually loses by exacting it. And sometimes the Commissioners have succeeded in destroying an entire branch of trade, and, of course, the duty which it used to pay has perished with it. An example of this is furnished by the material used in making hat-boxes. If you buy a new hat and order it to be sent home, it will come to you in a white box of particularly fragile character. Examine this box, and you will find that it is made of very thin wood covered with infinitely thin paper. As the latter makes you a present of this box you need not expect to find that it is an expensive article; and, indeed, if you buy one without a hat the price of it will be only sixpence. One reason why these boxes are so cheap is that the Excise officer levies no duty on scale-board—the material of which they are made. Boxes for the same purpose were formerly made of pasteboard, which was under the dominion of the Excise; and the usual price of such boxes was a shilling. But the competition of an untaxed article has ruined the manufacture of pasteboard boxes; and yet the Report tells us that the two substances resemble each other exactly in their uses, and very closely in their appearance—so closely, indeed, that we cannot help suspecting that, if the manufacture of scale-board had been first introduced within the last two years, the Court of Exchequer, which has lately developed considerable ingenuity in this direc-

tion, would have contrived to find arguments for holding it to be within the Excise Act. It is not, however, absolutely correct to say that there is no duty upon scale-board. We apprehend that the infinitely thin paper which covers the thin board could not have been lawfully manufactured without being charged with duty. If this be so, it follows that an article partially subject to Excise survey is capable of beating another article wholly subject to such survey out of the market. Perhaps it would be difficult to find a stronger fact than this in support of the sanguine estimate which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has expressed of the prospects of a general expansion of the paper-making trade likely to follow upon the abolition of the duty.

It must be owned that the Board of Inland Revenue has received from the Court of Exchequer, amid its difficulties, a zealous and efficient aid, for which, we think, the Report expresses much less gratitude than was deserved. The ever-recurring and difficult inquiry, "What is paper?" was raised, last year, in a revenue case, and received from the learned Barons a liberal solution, which we should, at first sight, have supposed was likely to assist the Commissioners in bringing many ingenious contrivances within their grasp. If they could not get an Act of Parliament to enlarge their powers, they had got a judicial decision to enlarge the existing Act; and this, for practical purposes, would not be much less useful. But let us see how it comes to pass that even a judgment for the Crown in a revenue case only helps the Commissioners out of one embarrassment in order to entangle them in another. Somewhere about two years ago began the manufacture of what is called artificial parchment. It was made of the skins, or portions of the skins, of animals, torn to fragments and reduced to pulp, and formed into sheets by exactly the same machinery and processes as are employed in making ordinary paper. It might, in fact, be called a paper made out of animal rags. The inventor supposed that he should be allowed to produce this artificial parchment free of duty. The supplies of material open to him were extensive, and the market for his commodity promised to be large. The heart of the philanthropist expanded at the notion of a cheapening of mortgages and other deeds. It was delightful to anticipate that the well-known item, "paid for stamps and parchment," in a solicitor's bill, would undergo reduction. It was admitted by the Court of Exchequer that a deed engrossed on this material looked very much like one written on the old familiar substance. In a colonial court, too, an objection had been taken to a record made up of the new material, on the ground that it was not parchment, and the objection had been overruled. Whether the new parchment would last as long as the old was known to do, could of course be proved only by the bold experiment of taking a conveyance of land upon it. But that question did not concern the excise officers. The Court had to decide upon the construction of the statute 2 and 3 Viet. c. 23, sec. 65, 66. The first of these sections enacts that the term "paper" shall include several kinds of paper which it names, and every other kind of paper by whatever denomination called. The next section provides that "all paper, button-board," &c., of whatever material made, and by whatever denomination called, and however manufactured, shall be deemed and taken to be "paper, button-board," &c., within the meaning of the Act. We have therefore these two rules—first, paper is paper, and, secondly, paper, however made, is paper. Now the artificial parchment was made at a paper mill. Its being called "parchment" did not hinder its being held to be, in the eye of the law, paper; and the fact of its being made of an animal substance was met by the words "of whatever material made," in the 66th section. Therefore the Court held that this was paper within the excise law. It was contended on the part of the manufacturer that, at any rate in common language, "paper" meant an article made of vegetable substances alone. But the Lord Chief Baron remarked, in giving judgment, that "paper, in some instances, has received an accession of animal matter to increase the bulk." He did not mention any instance. We could suggest that of woollen rags, which are, to some extent, used in paper-making. Another might, perhaps, be supplied by those foreign rags to which the paper-makers are now so piteously demanding access. An enthusiastic naturalist might describe such rags not untruly as "teeming with animal life;" and, although chemistry can destroy the vitality of a minute insect, we apprehend that it cannot annihilate his body, and surely the carcasses of many millions of minute insects must amount to an appreciable weight. However, it appears that the Court of Exchequer has supplied a tolerably satisfactory answer to the question "What is paper?" and it has shut up, for the time, the manufacture of artificial parchment. But the decision in this case has been the beginning instead of the end of controversies. In justice to the paper-makers it was necessary to bring artificial parchment—a new commodity—under the law which applied to them. But, having done so, the Board of Inland Revenue is immediately called on to explain upon what principle it exempts felt. Now felt, when made, resembles closely in appearance an article which is admitted to be paper. It is made of animal substance, and it is made by a process different from that of paper-making, but which appears to be very accurately described in the sixty-sixth section of the Act; and therefore the Court of Exchequer ought logically to hold that felt is paper. But felt is an old production which has always enjoyed exemption; and, therefore, if the Board of Inland Revenue could obtain a decision against the manufacturers of

felt, we know very well that they would not venture to act upon it without the sanction of Parliament, which certainly would not be granted to them.

On the whole, it appears that the Board has been fighting a losing battle ever since, at the suggestion of Sir Henry Parnell's Commission, it departed from the stern reserve of the old Excise Office, and condescended to answer the remonstrances addressed to it by the manufacturers who suffered under its iron grasp. A speedy end may be predicted to any despotism which begins to argue. It might have been possible, under the pressure of a very powerful necessity, to maintain the paper duty for a year or two longer; but this could only have been done under a distinct promise of its abolition at some fixed and early period. Such, at least, is the conclusion come to by the Board which has had to enforce this tax. It is also undeniable that a great variety of useful manufactures and economical processes will be facilitated by removing the excise officer from the paper-mill. It seems likely, for example, that printing will be largely carried on at the manufactory, and will, in fact, be often made the last of a series of processes of which the rag-tearing engine performs the first. Of course, on the other hand, paper soles for soldiers' shoes in a campaign, and "solid leather" portmanteaus will become more plentiful than ever; and it may be feared that, in the lapse of years, a set of title-deeds of artificial parchment may be reduced to a few handfuls of white dust in a tin box. But the public must take care of itself. We may at any rate congratulate the Volunteer regiments on the near prospect of cheap drums. It is stated that artificial parchment is capable of being applied to drum-heads—warranted, we suppose, to bear the most patriotic tunes played in the most enthusiastic manner by the strongest drummers.

COMPREHENSION OF DISSENTERS.

A REVOLUTIONARY principle can never be launched in a more dangerous shape than when it rolls glibly off the tongue of a gentleman of undoubted respectability and considerable influence, in the specious form of a philanthropic sentiment. Towards the close of the debate upon Mr. Dillwyn's preposterous Bill last week, Mr. Walter blandly enunciated views which, if they be not the emptiest platitudes, imply nothing less than the desire to see the Church of England fundamentally altered. First, he characterized that Bill, in its then shape, as being the second of two serious attacks on the Church—the former of these being the Bill for the Abolition of Church-rates, a measure for which, in the same breath, he informed the House that he himself had voted. He then went on to predict a third attack on the Church's remaining property, as the result, we suppose, of men who consider the abolition of Church-rates to be a measure of spoliation, nevertheless supporting such spoliation with vote and voice. He then took a further glance into futurity, and assumed that dissent would so far gain numerically upon the sum total of the population as to compel the question of Church and dissent to take the form which he had prophesied. Accordingly, as he asserted, the choice must be made between two alternatives. "One was a partition of the property of the Church," which he termed "injudicious and mischievous"—the other, which was proclaimed the "better and more beneficial arrangement," was the "adoption by the Church of some measure for conciliating a great number of persons" who were at "present in the position of dissenters, not so much because they differed from the Church on points of doctrine, but because they differed from her with respect to some trifling matter of discipline or government." The speech wound up with an anticipatory congratulation to the statesman who would bring about "so happy a reconciliation."

We may as well save our time by putting in, as granted, all that custom requires us to say of the excellent intentions, and so on, which characterize this suggestion, and proceed to some matter of fact questions. Where are the "great number of persons" to be found? and what are the "trifling matters of discipline and government," the concession of which would bring that great number back to the Church? We all understand, more or less clearly it may be, what the Church of England is, and no one is very ignorant as to the characteristics of dissent; nor does it require to have lived a great many years to learn that there is a fluctuating class, who sometimes appear at church and sometimes transfer their presence to chapel, and another class who never appear at either. But when we have mastered these facts, we are as unable either to see our way to Mr. Walter's panacea, or to comprehend the exact advantage of it, as we were before. The Church of England in its political and social aspect—the only one with which we are concerned—has certain broadly-marked characteristics, of which the principal and most noticeable is that species of complexity which to a foreigner seems inconsistency, but which in reality forms the main strength of the British polity and British independence. Our Constitution is antique, and yet it "belongs to the age"—it is aristocratic, and yet it is popular. Its machinery is very elaborate, and yet upon the whole it works more easily than the most spick-and-span new organic code. Checks and counter-checks seem to be laid like mantraps at every turn, yet every one of them is at the proper moment found to catch its trespasser. It rests on history and it appeals to actual wants. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same may be said of the Church of England, which has, side by side with the Constitution, grown out of its gorgeous

but oppressive feudalism into its actual liberty. Dissent on the other hand, whatever may be the individual or the class virtues which it creates and fosters, can never become that "institution," grand in its resources and powerful in the intellects which it trains and employs in the various lines of its influence, which the Church of England has, with various alternations of zeal or torpor, shown itself as an historical fact. Dissent signifies, *vi termini*, difference and breaking-off, and so the triumph of its principles would have made historical and actual England very different from what it is. It is well and right that the State should not interpose the slightest obstacle to any man following the bent of his conscience—it is well that the last of the social and political disqualifications of Dissenters should have been struck out of the statute-book. Dissent has now got a fair field, and the Church no favour, in Parliament; and if the enlightened six-pounders of the Tower Hamlets and Staleybridge succeed in leavening the whole mass, a future generation may live to see Little Bethel installed in Westminster Abbey, and the chairman of the "Liberation Society" occupying an official residence in Lambeth Palace.

This would be the fortune of war, just as it was the fortune of war that the "saints'" horses were stalled in Lichfield Cathedral, somewhat over two hundred years ago. But in the interests of Liberalism, of progress, of intellect, and sense (to put religious considerations aside) will it be good policy to take Mr. Walter's advice, and make our peace with Little Bethel while it still occupies its neat little sash-windowed chapel? It only requires, we are told, to give up some trifling matters of discipline or government, and all will be serene. Plausible as this proposal may sound, we are compelled to say, not that we disbelieve it, but that we cannot understand it. The Church of England, such as everybody knows it to be, is an organization which, together with a certain definite character, admits of infinite variety of practice, and tolerates great difference of opinion. Accordingly, among its members, lay and clerical, it comprehends the extremes each way of worldly wealth and position, and of intellectual power. In short, it is as comprehensive and liberal a religion as the world ever saw. One thing, however, there is which cannot be comprehended, and that is the something which drives the worshipper to Little Bethel or Ramoth Gilead. But can the Church be made to comprehend this something, and yet not forfeit that which has made it hitherto such a tower of strength in the land? Dissent is personal, subjective, isolated, or, at best, cliquish. It may combine, to be sure, in a pugnacious cause such as the crusade against Church-rates and so on, but its natural attitude is, when most pacific, one of a somewhat jealous self-exaltation. The very grounds for the separation of the so-termed "great number" given by Mr. Walter would prove the case against him if he stated them correctly. Nothing but qualities such as we have indicated could have led such large numbers to desert an institution membership of which involved, till lately, the exclusive right over so many and great material advantages, supposing that merely trifling matters of government and discipline had occasioned the split. Well, then, we say with all respect for Dissenters, let Dissent remain Dissent, and let the Church remain the Church. Each system, if left to work in its own way, will both do good to the whole body politic and keep its rival up to the collar. If, however, the two are comprehended—and comprehended, too, for reasons of pelf rather than of conscience—that is, comprehended, for fear, on the one side, as Mr. Walter prognosticates, of the division of the funds now belonging to the Church, and, on the other, for the very sake of a joint fruition of those funds—the result will simply be that both things will be spoilt. The experiment will end in that mixture of all colours which proves to be a dirty, unwholesome-looking whity-brown. Catsup and champagne have their respective merits, but mix them in the same glass, and you gain a nauseous beverage.

The truth is, that Mr. Walter, like many other ready-money reformers, begins at the wrong end. We are just as anxious as he to swell the numbers of the Church by incorporations—the more numerous the better—from dissent. But we should not go to work by looking up differences for the sake of removing them afterwards, and of enjoying the ceremonious importance of conducting a conference, a negotiation, a bargain, and, finally, a pompous reconciliation with dissenting bodies as bodies. This policy has been tried before, and it never has succeeded in doing anything more than widening the breach. The rational course is for the Church, to the best of its belief, and upon its own principles, to regulate itself for the truest advantage of the nation, and to trust that dissenters will reincorporate themselves with it—not, it may be, in congregations, with flags flying, and headed by ministers and deacons, but individually, as one person after the other sees that his advantage, moral and material, tends to an intelligent and sincere conformity.

The history of Dissent itself points in the direction of this policy. Sects were broken off from the Church, and have then broken and broken again off from each other; but in what single instance—except, perhaps, that of the utterly anomalous Irvingites—do we find this breach tending Churchward? What tender can Mr. Walter refer to, for the last 180 years, of proffered allegiance to the Church on stipulated conditions from any Dissenting body? We, of course, eschew arguing the assumed "trifling" nature of the differences the removal of which would, as the speaker thinks, produce reconciliation. It is the most dangerous policy, and the most shallow philosophy, to assume, off-hand,

that any feature in a system with which a man may not have a technical acquaintance is trifling. A mere incident may really be fundamental, and then the attempt to minimize its importance shows the shallow philosopher; or even, if not really so important, it may be so in the opinions of persons of weight, and then the attempt to meddle with it will stamp the would-be reformer as a dangerous politician. For our own part, we believe—taking, on the one hand, the most tolerant and comprehensive view of the Church of England, and, on the other, viewing Dissent in its most spiritual and intellectual aspects—that a comprehensive scheme entered on in Mr. Walter's spirit, and under the financial pressure which he conjures up as its motive power, would simply end by dragging into more irritating prominence than ever those points of fundamental difference which, whatever there may be in common to the two systems, unquestionably separate English Churchmanship and English Dissent.

At the best or at the worst—whichever people may think it—Mr. Walter would assuredly only multiply differences. We mean that, even supposing he were to succeed in squeezing together a certain portion of the Church and a certain portion of Dissent into one sweet mass, as figs and almonds are squeezed together into one cake, yet most assuredly a large, angry, able, and unsqueezable residuary Church of England would be left out of the process; and an equally angry and unsqueezable congeries of Dissenters would likewise decline to place itself under the mill; while the new ricketty State Church, rich in worldly wealth, but deficient in self-respect and principle, hating and hated by the two exasperated and determined extremes, would ignobly alternate as the ally, dupe, and antagonist of the various belligerents. But let our policy—that of self-amelioration and extension—be consistently followed out by the Church, and we have little doubt that, even if a conflict such as Mr. Walter anticipates should take place, the Church would be well able to hold its own. Indeed, within a week after the delivery of this speech, Mr. Walter has aided in the attempt to carry out a portion of his Church reform, the result of which we should imagine not even he would consider peculiarly encouraging for fresh experiments. On Wednesday he propounded his plan for converting our free churches into pew-rented conventicles. He had powerful auxiliaries behind and before. The *Times* had written up the notion that morning, and a Cabinet Minister afterwards moved its adoption in the shape of a substantive clause. Yet the House, with one consent, absolutely clamoured down the proposal, and Sir George Grey did not even dare to bring it to a division.

We have insisted the more strongly upon the dangerous features of Mr. Walter's speech on account of what is going on in other quarters. The ubiquitous machinations of the "Liberation Society" are beginning to be understood, while a Peer equally steady in character and narrow in his sympathies, fresh from the excitement of sitting for a metropolitan county, strong in good intentions and impregnable in obstinacy, can find no better vent for gushing energies, no longer needed at Brentford or on supply nights, than the creation of an agitation to pull about that Prayer Book the actual *bene esse* of which—speculative points apart—is the safeguard of that of the Church of England itself. These and other similar incidents, small and great, concur with the advent of a Napoleonic Budget and a Tower-Hamletized Parliament. It is, therefore, time for those who desire to see great national institutions rescued from unprincipled rapine and vulgar deterioration, to expose alike the truculent menaces of their opponents and the bland plausibilities of their weak and vacillating friends.

THE GODS OF EPICURUS.

IF Mr. Williams had been an ancient philosopher he would probably have observed that the Epicurean deities were very inefficient and overpaid officials. They enjoyed themselves amazingly, drunk delicious nectar, no doubt at the public expense of the universe, and generally lived at home at ease in the clouds above; but when it came to the thorny task of governing the world, they preferred to let all the perplexing catalogue of human difficulties "settle themselves." In the cycles of the ages, the Gods of Epicurus have come to sit at Westminster. Our legislators have inherited, perhaps not exactly their style of living, but certainly their style of doing business. In times of no distant date, before the Epicurean *afflatus* had descended upon them, they held that something might be done, and ought forthwith to be done, towards remedying every grievance. They held that every rent could be patched up; and if it tore when mended one way, they mended it another. Their idea of legislation was passing laws. It might be an antique and barbarous notion, but it did produce prompt and real action whenever they thought action was required. Our legislators for the last ten years have been of a more enlightened school. They have learned completely that doctrine of pure non-intervention of which the Gods of Epicurus were the first exemplars. In other capacities, they fall very far short of the Lucretian ideal. They can wrangle and talk, and fidget and fuss as vivaciously as the nimblest sprites of western mythology. In fact, from morn till midnight the Houses of Parliament resemble nothing so much as a disturbed ant-hill. At all hours of the day and night members may be seen hurrying from one part to another of the vast pile,

now in this direction, now in that, with all the aimless and resultless energy of the frightened insects. But none of this haste or vigour is allowed to find its way into the business of government or legislation. As legislators, they sit serene above all earthly cares, listlessly contemplating, but never influencing, the busy, restless interests that cross and jostle each other under their eyes. In talking, their constant entreaty, in every controversy, is for a "settlement of the question"—in action, their constant policy is to let the question settle itself. Our debates are full of these unsettled questions. Reform is about ten years old; tenant-right is about fifteen; Church-rates is approaching the ripe age of twenty-seven; the conveyance of land cannot be far from its thirty-fifth year. In the presence of such veterans it is superfluous to mention mere bantlings like the purchase question, which is only six years old, or the bankruptcy question, which is barely five. These are not cases of mere annuals, constantly obtruded by a restless minority who wish to alter a law with which the majority are satisfied. In each of them there has been all along a dominant opinion, able at any moment to command a majority, and recognising the necessity of a greater or less degree of change. But the statesmen who could have applied that majority were content to sit still, looking down with languid serenity upon the vexed entanglement of these questions, occasionally lifting up their voices to express a pious hope that "they might soon be settled." Church-rates is a typical instance of the class. Of course it had its difficulties. If the only function of Parliament is to multiply fine harangues upon commonplaces, and to look the other way when a knotty point is mentioned, it scarcely repays the labour, and expense, and excitement into which the nation plunges at each election. An old law, applied to communities of recent growth, might be expected to work unevenly and rustily, and occasionally to fly altogether out of gear. Nearly thirty years ago it was obvious that the question must be settled or it would work itself into a sore. Any one of the settlements which are now vainly urged, might, till very recently, have been carried by any man of note who had the firmness of will to undertake it. The rate might have been bought up, or charged on land, or exemptions might have been granted to parishes or to individuals. But now parties have been irritated to that degree of superheated passion that any settlement that can be arrived at will be remembered and rankle as a tyranny in the minds of many. The Reform Bill is much in the same case. If the question had been disposed of, one way or the other, as soon as it arose, that specially dangerous irritation would have been avoided, which belongs, not to victory or defeat, but to the protracted uncertainty, the incessant alternation in men's minds of hopes and fears, on the subject of a change constantly promised and constantly delayed. The question of bribery is rapidly growing up to take its place in the same class. Committee after committee, in such cases as Wakefield, Gloucester, Berwick, Norwich, unroll a picture of corruption, debauchery, and perjury revolting enough to afflict even a Parliamentary agent with permanent dyspepsia. It is becoming the stigma of our institutions. Foreign organs of despotism joyously taunt us with it, and our American detractors, who avoid any such indiscreet revelations among themselves, point to it with delight as the symptom of imminent decay. Committees sit, and apply for commissions. Commissions sit, and make out an ample case for disfranchisement. Writs are suspended—everything is ready for the final blow; and then our statesmen sleepily suffer things to fall back into their old condition with the expression of a languid hope "that this degrading practice may be speedily abandoned." It is the growing vice of the senatorial mind. The mass of members become more active and less effective every year. To any amount of toil they will readily gird themselves. They will wade through any amount of inquiry and discussion. They will face anything except the responsibility of action. They like the privilege of being legislators so long as they need not legislate. But the time is passed when men will worship deities who only drink the nectar, and will not trouble themselves to govern.

If the House shows a rooted aversion to active measures on all questions of public interest, it turns with all the more zest to the settlement of a personal quarrel. The contrast is very edifying between its languor on such subjects as Church-rates or Reform and the vigour with which it administers correction to poor Mr. Churchward's sins. It is not often the House carries on a debate till two o'clock on a Tuesday night; but the time was well spent in illustrating its own marvellous purity. Pamela herself was not a more striking instance of virtue triumphant amid temptation than is the House of Commons amid the solicitations of corrupt agents and contractors. People are always trying to affix a stigma on its members—to do dirty things in their name and for their benefit, and then lay the blame on them. But the most painstaking investigation—conducted of course by the House of Commons itself—always results in the conclusion that though agents and subordinates are full of guile, the member impugned himself is spotless. The upshot of the Report which indignant virtue, in the bodily form of Mr. Bouverie, was engaged in defending on Tuesday, was a recommendation that Mr. Churchward should be fined some hundreds of pounds for attempting to seduce the Lords of the Admiralty into the crooked paths of electioneering. We have not a word to say for the luckless culprit, but we suppose we shall next hear of Mr. Bouverie proposing to punish some wicked constituency that has tampered with the virtue of the late lamented

Mr. Coppock. Mr. Churchward's plan of seduction was an intimation that, if his contract was renewed, Government candidates would be elected for Dover. The contract was renewed, and the Government candidates were elected. But as such coincidences are apt to provoke malignant suspicions, the whole matter was referred to a Select Committee. The finding of the Committee was a beautiful specimen of graduated censure. The First Lord was, of course, perfectly innocent. Being a member of the House of Commons, it was impossible that he should be otherwise. The private secretary was "very indiscreet;" but the poor, wretched contractor, who had only wished to stand well with every body, was guilty of trying to corrupt the Government, and was sentenced for this enormity to a heavy pecuniary loss. It was clear, from the lofty tone of successive official speakers, that the use of Admiralty influence at sea-port towns is a corrupt practice of an awful heinousness to which no Board of Admiralty will stoop. The future historian, with this debate before his eyes, will be perplexed not a little by the fact that Admiralty sea-ports generally change their political predilections with every change of Government.

It is quite evident, however, that the virtue of purity is an arrant tuft-hunter, and only frequents polite society. The same phenomenon is curiously attested by the unanimous experiences of Election Committees. The electors in any impugned constituency generally furnish some specimens of corruption whose names and offences are duly reported at full length. But this bribery is generally committed without the cognizance even of the agents of the candidates. It may be presumed, therefore, that the bribes are given out of pure wantonness by some wholly unconnected person, and that their being given at election time is a mere chance coincidence. But whether the agent be involved or not, there is one person who never has anything to do with it, and that is the candidate on whose behalf it is done. The conclusion of a Committee's Report runs invariably in one form—"It was not proved to their satisfaction that such bribery was committed with the knowledge or consent of A. B., Esq., and C. D., Esq., the sitting members." The Act of Parliament requires the form, or else it would be superfluous; for, being members of Parliament, they of course cannot be guilty of corruption.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE PUBLICANS.

MR. GLADSTONE has done his best to persuade us that one of the best items of his Budget was not spoiled by the oligarchy of brewers. On Monday night he introduced the Refreshment House and Wine Licenses Bill, and recommended it on the narrowest issue. This is a stroke of policy to which the only objection is that it comes too late. There is no need of assuring the brewers and publicans that the Bill was framed for the express purpose of not disturbing the interests of the licensed victuallers, when it is notorious that it was in defence and submission to the clamour of the tap-room that a most serious and, as we believe, an extremely useful interference with the interests of the licensed victuallers was abandoned. Either the original proposition, that the new refreshment houses should be licensed for the sale of beer, was, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer must now admit, a crude and wanton defiance of the tap-tub interest—a defiance which barked without daring to bite—or it was a valuable political reform which the Government was unable to carry, because the great brewers were too strong for the Cabinet. It may be quite true that the time has not come for dealing with the licensing question; and, if so, it was an especial mistake to encumber the Budget with an additional and unprofitable offence to another vested interest. It may be prudent to withdraw an invading column when you find out that you have miscalculated your strength; but to take credit for moderation and cool judgment after a failure in an ambitious attack, is in keeping with that habit of mind which creates a difficulty for the intellectual pleasure of conquering or evading, welcoming or defying it. For it amounts to about the same thing to an ingenious logician whether you succeed or fail, if the difficulty is only made for the express purpose of playing with it.

At any rate, for Mr. Gladstone's purpose it seems to be much the same whether the original or the amended plan, the first or second thought, was the result of political wisdom or a mere blunder, as it is to ourselves of little importance whether it argues levity or impotence in its inventor. But to the country it cannot be equally important or unimportant to say, as Mr. Gladstone has said, first that the restaurateur ought, and then that he ought not, to sell beer. Nor is this the only inconsistency which marks the progress of this measure. Inconsistent in selecting a course, Mr. Gladstone is equally inconsistent in his reasons for the plan which he at last patronizes. He recommends his Bill on grounds either of which would be complete, but which, taken together, cannot be reconciled. The refreshment houses are called into existence in order to give the cheap wines free access to the British throat—the end and aim of the Bill is purely fiscal and commercial. We have reduced the wine duties; we must force on an increased consumption in order to compensate the revenue; and the retailing of wine, and consequent creation of wine shops, are the necessary machinery for this enlarged consumption. On this narrow ground—and it is that on which the Bill was recommended on Monday night—it

was not necessary that the confectioners should deal in beer; and had Mr. Gladstone stopped here, he would have said just as much as the occasion required. It was a narrow vindication of a narrow object. But he goes further. He drifts off, according to his wont, from the economical moorings into the high seas of moral and social reasoning out of all soundings. His object is to recur to first principles. He begins with the beginning of things. Eating and drinking have always gone together—it is only modern legislation which has broken the *entente cordiale* between the grinders and the throat. We always suspect a fallacy when we are invited to fall back on first principles. That eating and drinking ought to go together we admit; but this is hardly a justification for giving us only thin wine and no beer with our victuals. It is not given to everybody to relish *vin ordinaire* with his chop; and therefore, if it was necessary that eating and drinking, victuals and liquor, should be henceforth inseparable, we ought to have had a choice in our drinks. Mr. Gladstone's second argument is fatal to his first. To compel a man to drink nothing but wine may be justified on the revenue ground; but it will not do to take credit for the fiscal as well as the sanitary and physiological reasons at the same time.

The fact is, that the Budget aimed at more than it could carry; but Mr. Gladstone, having elaborated an excellent justification for the larger scheme which he first proposed, had not the heart, in recommending the curtailed plan, to abandon his argument with the same facility with which he deserted his principle. Nor does he take anything by it. He is only taunted by his betrayers. The licensed victuallers are particularly impressive in pointing out that the scheme before Parliament is a very poor specimen of Free-trade. "It is not Free-trade," they say, in their remarkable memorial, "to let one man retail wine, and another beer, while each is prevented from vending the other." To be sure, Mr. Gladstone originally intended that this anomaly should not exist, and, in his announcement of the Budget, he extended to the new restaurateurs the privilege of selling beer as well as wine; but, as it is on the publicans' own agitation and dictation that the proposed confectioner's license is to be restricted to wine, it is but right that they who compelled the Minister to be inconsistent and unjust should remind him of the fact. Indeed, the publicans see their advantage, and press it—whether in the long run it will not be to their own confusion, is another matter. Mr. Gladstone is not the man to be twitted too much; the stag once at bay may turn upon the hounds, and the day may come when the publicans and brewers will be taken at their word. It is an inconsistency that the restaurateurs are not to retail beer; and the effect on the present licensing system, as the band of publicans remark of Mr. Gladstone's scheme, is that at one and the same time it exhibits distrust and suspicion of the local magistrates, while it adds very largely to their powers and influence. We are thankful for these truths, though it would have been more prudent in their present advocates not to bring them into prominence. Still truth is truth; and the trade in liquor is not free while the licensing system exists, and while publicans have a monopoly in the retailing of beer. This is not the first time that the word of truth has been forced from unwilling witnesses. Balaam and Caiaphas were prophets against their own consent; and the publicans may preach economical truth and Free-trade in its purest form, even though they represent the closest and most arrogant monopoly in the kingdom. Indeed this is their burthen that is laid upon them—to preach most impressive homilies against their own practice. We have often heard of the dreadful character of the sin of drunkenness; but we should never have thought of a Temperance meeting held at a gin-palace, or a publican descanting on the wickedness of adulterating liquors. What a nuisance is the public-house! It "encourages burglars, highwaymen, and sharpers"—it is "the focus of political agitation"—it is "the resort of the idle and improvident"—it "imperils decency and order"—it "encourages the use of the lowest and vilest compounds and adulterations"—"the country is in a state of well-founded alarm at the enormous increase of" tippling. "In England and Wales alone there is a licensed victualler's house to every 202 of the population, while there is only one parish church for every 1384." This is the sort of language we expect in a Visitation sermon, a charge from Mr. Recorder Warren, and the tracts issued by the Teetotallers; but it is very odd language to come from the licensed victuallers themselves. We have, however, only quoted their memorial addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and printed by order of the House of Commons. The phenomenon is much the same as the moral discourse addressed to Lysimachus in a place where sermons are seldom preached. But the country is in an edifying state when its publicans are its prophets, its stage its pulpit, and its courtesans attend pious tea-parties. We can only congratulate sobriety, temperance, and morality when the tap-tub itself becomes a pulpit.

It would be superfluous to inquire whether the licensed victuallers see the full force of their own arguments. As we have said, they may be taken at their word in the matter of free-trade; and even the language of teetotallers may be turned against them. They have appealed, in one curious paper, to the reasons usually assigned by the advocates of a Maine Liquor Law, and in the same breath to those urged by the opponents of the brewers' monopoly. Were either of these two allies of the publicans to succeed, King Stork would have replaced King Log, so far as the

race of Bonifaces is concerned. Whatever else comes of it—whether we shall decide that there ought to be no limit to public houses, or that each and every public house is a sin and abomination—either solution of the difficulty will settle the case of the licensed victuallers and the sixty millions invested in the trade. They complain that they are the constant victims of tentative legislation; but either the Temperance Society or Free-trade would administer a very different *coup de grâce*. They have appealed to both, and one of the two they will certainly have. We are quite at one with the publicans in their conclusion that there is no justice or principle in their present position. Perhaps the next time they come under Mr. Gladstone's hands they will be taken at their word. To Free-trade they have appealed—to Free-trade we trust they will go.

THE DOVER PACKET CONTRACT.

IF any one desires a conclusive proof that bribery and kindred evils are not likely to be soon eradicated, he need only look to the debate and the division in the House of Commons on Tuesday evening, on the question of the renewal of the Dover Mail Packet Contract, held by Mr. Churchward. It is simply wonderful that some half-dozen members by their speeches, and upwards of a hundred by their votes, should deliberately set at naught the evidence taken before two Committees of the House, and should contend, in spite of proofs which carry conviction to every impartial mind, that no improper means were used, or attempted to be used, to obtain the renewal of this contract, and that it would be a breach of public faith if Parliament were to refuse to ratify it. We have no difficulty whatever in admitting that, if Mr. Churchward were to be indicted for an attempt to bribe the Admiralty, he would be almost certain to obtain a verdict of acquittal. Far be it from us to suggest that there would be anything to lament in such a result; but when Sir Fitzroy Kelly and Mr. Malins argued, from this necessary concession of their opponents, that Mr. Churchward would be a grossly ill-used man if the ratification of his contract were denied him, we can only say that their speeches furnished one among many proofs that practised and successful lawyers find it difficult to adapt themselves to the unfamiliar task of arguing so as to produce conviction, or even to command respect, in the House of Commons. The matter about which all this eloquence was poured forth had really been made plain enough to the minds of all but partisans by the Report of the Committee of last year upon Packet Contracts; and after the recent Report of the Dover Election Committee it is surprising that any controversy should still be raised even by Mr. Churchward's most persevering and injudicious friends. It is beyond all question that the contract was improvident, and that Mr. Churchward attempted to employ improper means to induce the late Government to enter into it. If these points were proved beyond dispute, the House of Commons could do no otherwise than refuse, as it has done, to authorize the fulfilment of the contract—unless it intended the constituencies to believe that all its anger against electoral corruption is a mere sham, and that while it pretends to punish those who offer bribes to needy voters, it has rather a friendly sympathy with a man who tenders to the Government his assistance in carrying a borough with a hint that he expects his reward in getting easily into a profitable employment.

It is highly creditable to Mr. Churchward's tactics that the newspapers which contain the report of the decision against him in the House of Commons should also be supplied with a paragraph announcing that great improvements in the Continental Mail Service are to be introduced, under his auspices, on the 1st of May next. This is a distinct appeal from any lingering sense which we may retain of morality and decency to our trading instincts. Mr. Churchward knows that we are all of us mere shopkeepers at heart, and so he coolly offers his acceleration of the postal services as an inducement to the public to discard any solicitude it may feel about maintaining the character of Parliament. "It is true," he seems to say, "that I obtained my contract by means which some purists may think questionable; but see how skilfully I am working under it to promote your commercial interests and your convenience." He has got our measure as accurately as they have it at the Tuileries. Surely the British public will not be hard upon an attempt at jobbing by a clever man who has arranged to carry the mails and passengers from London to Paris in less than eleven hours. Mr. Churchward understands his age; and if, after a year or so, the subject of his contracts should come again before the House of Commons, he need not despair of finding that his management of the postal services will be remembered, while his insidious assaults upon the virtue of public officers will be forgotten.

There is, however, one point in Mr. Churchward's favour to which it would be most unfair not to give all the prominence we can. He appears to be the solitary Englishman who, in recent times, has contrived to avoid getting "done" in his dealings with the accomplished ministers of the French Emperor. It is almost a subject of regret that Mr. Churchward was not employed to negotiate the Commercial Treaty. He has now held, for some years, contracts for carrying the French as well as the English mails. The contract which he entered into with the French Government contained a clause binding him, in case of a maritime war, to give up two of his

ships for the French service. We suppose Mr. Churchward would say, in apology for this clause, that, like the article in the Commercial Treaty about coals, it was intended to apply only to a state of peace. He also intimated to the Committee that, although he had entered into a contract containing such a clause, yet he had never any intention of performing it. We say again, that Mr. Churchward was formed by nature to negotiate with the Tuileries; and if he will add to his other duties those of resident plenipotentiary in France, he will never hear from us a single word of objection to his renewed contract. One cannot help admiring the hardy indifference which he displays to distinctions which the majority of Englishmen have been used to think important. We don't blame him very severely for holding that whether Whig or Tory sat for Dover mattered less than the prosperity of his own business. It would be, as Mr. Dickens says, "putting too fine a point on it," to expect unbending political consistency from a Government contractor. But really we must protest that peace and war, France and England, are not exactly the same things. Mr. Churchward contracts with the Admiralty to keep six vessels to carry the English mails. Then he contracts with the Ministers of the Emperor to keep three vessels to carry the French mails. It had occurred to his ingenious mind that the same vessels might perform both contracts, and thus he saw his way to offer low tenders both to the English and French Governments. There are those who will admire the commercial sagacity of this arrangement; but for our own part we should prefer to see rather less of the *entente cordiale* between the postal services of the two countries. Here are vessels built and also really owned in England, although perhaps ostensibly owned in France also. They are principally, but not wholly, maintained by the English Admiralty, and in case of war it is provided that they shall form part of the French fleet. We do not apprehend that this country would be in any serious danger from an invasion by a couple of Calais packet-boats. Still, even in this utilitarian age, some small respect remains due to principles. Mr. Churchward is an English subject, and, being so, he contracts with the French Government that in case of a maritime war, which of course means a war between France and England, he will furnish two vessels for the French service. Perhaps Sir Fitzroy Kelly, or some other of Mr. Churchward's legal friends, will be kind enough to tell him that, if he is not more careful, he may actually become liable, in certain very possible contingencies, to be tried on an indictment which would not fail for want of legal evidence. As Mr. Churchward is a great authority on naval matters, we wonder he does not propose a plan for a large pecuniary saving by keeping the same Channel Fleet for both France and England. This would be merely an extension of the system on which he has established the economical and expeditious mail service on account of which his partisans now claim for him his country's gratitude. We have long been used to see in the historic drama the same soldiers doing battle at one moment for the Red and at the next for the White Rose. A contract admitting of this strange *hocus-pocus* between French and English ships demands deliberate inquiry before receiving an extension for such a term as seven years, to commence three years hence. Indeed it is hardly possible to conceive that the grant last year of a contract to commence in 1863 could under any circumstances be a prudent measure. The condemnation of that prospective contract by a Committee has now been adopted by the House, and we believe that this deliberate judgment has been received with general satisfaction.

REVIEWS.

POEMS BEFORE CONGRESS.*

THE serious prosaic utterance of almost any proposition which has been paraphrased into Mrs. Browning's poetical rhapsody would be culpable, pitiable, or silly. It is not permitted to Englishmen, or even to Englishwomen, to renounce, in the language of ordinary life, allegiance, loyalty, national instinct, and the deep-rooted faith in freedom which shrinks from usurping upstarts as sensitively as from legitimate despots. Metre has, by long-established convention, acquired a privilege of irresponsibility, which criticism by no means ought to withdraw, although poets have too often attempted to abuse it. While the greatest of all masters of the art have kept their own opinions and characters in the background, high authority is not wanting for the attempt to combine the long separated offices of poet and of prophet. Lord Byron owes the greater part of his fame to his ingenuity in connecting a fictitious personality of his own with the unsatisfactory but popular gospel which it was his mission to preach. Subsequent revelations have shown that the Satanic attributes which he had assumed were only assumed for the purpose of imposing on the general credulity, while the doctrines of *Childe Harold* and *Don Juan* expressed sometimes genuine irritation, and more frequently a desire to shock, to surprise, or to command admiration and sympathy. In private conversation he generally repudiated the character which he had made it the business of his life to obtain, and the same course is

* *Poems before Congress*. By Elizabeth Barrett Browning. London: Chapman and Hall. 1860.

generally adopted from similar motives by metrical moralists and politicians. When the wisdom of their utterances is welcomed with universal applause, they willingly let the mask slip aside to display their own individual features, and with better reason they disclaim the sophisms, the blunders, and the perversities which unreasonable critics fix on them, merely because they find them in their works. It ought once for all to be understood that all sentiments in poetry, however they may seem to express the convictions of the writer, are to be attributed to some dramatic personage, and to be judged by their adaptation to his assumed idiosyncrasy. The poet has no more right to step forward in his own person than the advocate to claim the confidence of the Court in his own pretended knowledge of the justice of his cause. It is intolerable that the actor should be any longer allowed to play fast and loose with the sympathies of his audience. Béranger, after winning the affections of his countrymen by describing himself in his songs as a licentious Parisian Cockney, was careful to assert in his autobiography the prudence and decorum of his actual career. Henceforth it will be safe to assume that future Byrons are patterns of domestic virtue, and that Walter de Mapes was incapable of entering the doors of a tavern.

Notwithstanding her imprudent efforts to obtain a hearing in her own person, Mrs. Browning will find it impossible to repudiate the immunities which are inseparably attached to her sex and to her genius. In calling attention to the peculiar doctrines of her present volume, the critic must resolutely forget the personality of the writer. It is not difficult to appreciate the circumstances and mental position of the dramatic character whose idolatrous devotion to Napoleon III. is, with much dramatic fitness, associated with a whole chaos of ignorant prejudices and antipathies against England. A short preface of stilted prose must be included in the fictitious unity of the poem, although Mrs. Browning interrupts the illusion by a statement, which is probably intended to be accepted in its literal sense, that she herself, as well as the pretended worshipper of Bonapartism, has resided for many years in Italy. During that period she must have had many opportunities of witnessing the deteriorating influences which affect the cosmopolitan English exile who divides his idleness between dilettante Liberalism and dilettante art. Detached from his native soil without being engrafted on a foreign stock—unable to test new and plausible systems by practical experience, and gradually forgetting more and more the meaning and the bearing of his native institutions—the loungeur of Paris or of Florence adopts from fluent foreign teachers their opinions, first of their own internal politics, and secondly of that very England which he ought to have known better himself. Forgetting the lessons taught by the history of the only free race of modern Europe, the feeble seceder from true political life learns to believe in democracy or socialism as a substitute for liberty, and little further preparation is needed for an effeminate acquiescence in the supremacy of lawless force. The dignity, the calmness, the foresight which still characterize a self-governing nation are merged in a blind enthusiasm for some cause which, even when it is worthy, is generally ill-understood. Mrs. Browning's mouthpiece, or poetical organ, has long ceased to understand that any political object can be worth regarding except the expulsion of the Austrians, and of the Princes whom they supported, from the provinces of Italy. In a delirium of imbecile one-sidedness, the denationalized fanatic protests against the Volunteer movement, because it is intended for the defence of England and not for the liberation of Tuscany:—

I cry aloud in my poet-passion,
Viewing my England o'er Alp and sea;
I loved her more in her ancient fashion;
She carries her rifles too thick for me,
Who spares them so in the cause of a brother.

Suspicion, panic? end this pother;
The sword, kept sheathless at peace-time rusts;
None fears for himself while he feels for another;
The brave man either fights or trusts,
And wears no mail in his private chamber.

There is much fitness and coherency in the portraiture of the illogical renegade, who persuades himself that the England which he calls "his" has no alternative between an unprovoked war with Austria and a total abandonment of all preparations for self-defence. Securities against a French invasion of England strike him as purposeless absurdities, because they have never formed the subject of discussion in Liberal Italian casinos. The cant of Continental democrats, all deriving their inspiration from France, finds a ready mimic in the English convert, who echoes their ignorant calumnies in the shape of unauthorized apologies. The fixed idea of French journalists, that England goes to war only for the sake of fresh markets, is reproduced in characteristically fantastic verses as a contrast to the pure and disinterested virtue of the potentate who is designated in capital letters as HE and HIM:—

He, though the merchants persuade,
And the soldiers are eager for strife,
Finds not his country in quarrels,
Only to find her in trade.

The inference that the Russian war was undertaken on the part of England for the protection of domestic tallow or hemp, would seem to any declaimer at any *café* on the Continent equally natural and degrading.

By an easy fiction, the ex-Englishman of the volume is supposed to be a poet, and Mrs. Browning's genius enables her to display considerable metrical ability even in the repulsive task of embodying his servile and seditious platitudes. The burden of the principal poem expresses rather concisely than gracefully the conviction which seems most deeply impressed on the cosmopolitan or table-d'hôte haunting mind:—

Emperor
Evermore.

Such is the refrain of a long dithyramb, and the words, though they have as little rhyme as reason, may serve to indicate an unbounded reverence for lawless strength and histrionic greatness. The poor prattler is deeply impressed with the act of the "eight millions who swore by their manhood's right divine," &c., to renew the Empire; and, with the unfailing instinct of servility, he rejoices in the triumph of numbers over the intelligence and conscience which alone guard natural freedom:—

The thinkers stood aside
To let the nation act.
Some hated the new constituted fact
Of empire, as pride treading on their pride.

The cosmopolitan poet imagined by the poetess is as superior to moral considerations as to a regard for human dignity protesting against triumphant despotism:—

That day I did not hate,
Nor doubt, nor quail, nor curse.
I, reverencing the people, did not bate
My reverence of their deed and oracle,
Nor vainly prate
Of better and of worse
Against the great conclusion of their will.

It is impossible to follow more faithfully the precedent of Pontius Pilate, although, indeed, that ill-famed Liberal did attempt a little "to prate of better and of worse" against the great conclusion of universal suffrage which returned Barabbas for his approval. However, it seems that the fictitious poet abstained from expressing the enthusiasm so naturally excited by the elevation of a Power dangerous to England and destructive of all liberty in France. It was not before the invasion of Lombardy that—

We meet thee, O Napoleon, at this height
At last, and find thee great enough to praise.
Receive the poet's chrism, which swells beyond
The priest's, and pass thy ways;
An English poet warns thee to maintain
God's word, not England's.

For how should the profound conviction of all thoughtful Englishmen be other than inconsistent with the will of God, as revealed in the creed of democratic despotism?

Some fine stanzas are devoted to the celebration of the Italian campaign, but Mrs. Browning seems to violate the dramatic unity of her poem when she satirizes, through the mouth of her fictitious flatterer, the hero at whose feet he is represented as grovelling. After the experience of six months, there is an irony too transparent for poetic uses in the description of Napoleon III. as a Sovereign superior to the traditional frauds of Absolutist diplomacy:—

Is this a man like the rest,
This miracle made unaware,
By a rapture of popular air,
And caught to the place that was best?
You think he could barter and cheat
As vulgar diplomats use,
With the people's heart in his breast?
Prate a lie into shape
Lest truth should cumber the road,
Play at fast and loose
Till the world is strangled with tape?
Maim the soul's complete
To fit the hole of a toad;
And filch the dogman's meat
To feed the offspring of God.

It is impossible to say whether the Emperor Napoleon, or any other person, can be supposed to perform the unknown operations which are shadowed forth in the last four lines; but, as to his bartering and cheating "as vulgar diplomats use," the English reader modestly replies that there would be great injustice in comparing the inspirer of M. Thouvenel's despatches to any vulgar diplomatist. A prophecy follows that he will be applauded for ever—

Not only within the civic wall
By the loyal, but also without
By the generous and free.

The admission that the generous and free are outside that wall of loyalty within which Parisian journalists sing their master's praises, is somewhat inconsistent with the assumed character of the Anglo-foreign devotee.

The apparent shortcomings of Villafranca are defended on two somewhat incompatible assumptions. Gallicized Liberalism at one moment represents the Imperial hero as withdrawing into his own conscious greatness, of which the world was not worthy:

The world is many—I am one;
My great Deed was too great.

But the worshippers of force invariably admire the associated virtue of cunning; and "An August Voice," in a poem under the same title, appeals to the Tuscans not to take back the Grand Duke, whom the same divine organ had promised to Austria to

restore. Horace and Virgil, though by no means chary of sycophantic phrases, never went so far as to compliment Augustus by attributing to him wilful and interested mendacity.

The only poem which is unconnected with the subject of the French war in Italy contains a so-called curse against the United States on account of negro slavery. The priestess, or Pythoness, who delivers the commination is, like the bearded exile of the Imperialist eulogy, an English resident abroad, who seems to cultivate patriotic attachment to every country but her own. When an angel enjoins her to indite her superfluous execration, she endeavours, with more than the perversity of Balaam, to express by preference that hysterical antipathy to England which Mrs. Browning attributes in turn to almost all her characters:—

"Not so," I answered. "Evermore
My heart is sore
For my own land's sins: for little feet
Of children bleeding along the street:
For parked-up honors that gainsay
The right of way;
For almsiving through a door that is
Not open enough for two friends to kiss.
* * * * *
For an oligarchic Parliament,
And bribes well meant,
What curse to another land assign
When heavy souled for the sins of mine?"

This is the kind of stuff which ignorant foreigners delight to repeat; and their pleasure is multiplied tenfold when English renegades can be found to vent calumnies against a land which they have forgotten. There are more barefooted children and rough pavements, and a greater amount of neglected poverty in any Italian village than in an English town of thrice the population. An "oligarchic Parliament" implies the Government of a country by its natural leaders, and not by the nominees of a Prefect or the delegates of a mob. The unmeaning jargon of "bribes well meant," characteristically represents the mannerism of the class which Mrs. Browning has selected for representation; yet it is strange that a true poetess should amuse herself by contemplating the objects of her art through so exceptional and distorted a medium.

If Mrs. Browning herself has ever been transiently affected by the prejudices and impulses which she represents in life-like absurdity, it would be unjust as well as discourteous to censure too severely the aspirations of an enthusiastic lady who may for a moment have been inclined to look at the world only as it relates to Florentine politics. She has probably by this time found that every Italian statesman worthy of the name concurs substantially in the opinions which have long been universally entertained in England. The character and designs of the individual ruler who has given the Italians an opportunity of liberation are in themselves of secondary importance. It is not because a despot abuses his omnipotence, but because he possesses it, that Englishmen abhor the system which he represents. Twenty crusades would not cure the inherent defect of a Government which rests on an irresistible armed force. There is no occasion to declaim, either in verse or in prose, against the form of Government to which foreigners may submit, but if the subject must be discussed, it is not unfitting "to prate of better and of worse" in the spirit in which a poet of a former generation denounced the first of the Bonapartes:—

Never may from our souls this truth depart,
That an accursed thing it is to gaze
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye.

Mrs. Browning knows Greek well enough to understand that a tyrant is not necessarily an ogre, and that his crime consists mainly in the superiority to law which he has perhaps attained by successful usurpation.

GREENWOOD'S CATHEDRA PETRI.*

IT is unlucky for Mr. Greenwood that his book should have appeared so soon after another work on the same subject, quite as valuable in substance, and far more attractive and artistic in form. We have no doubt that he had studied his subject and planned his book as early as Dean Milman had his; but Dean Milman, as a matter of fact, has got the start of him. And, though Mr. Greenwood's mere amount of research seems to be quite equal to Dean Milman's, he is very far from having Dean Milman's gift of making his researches useful and agreeable to others. Nevertheless, a reader of his book need not look very far to see that it is the work of a really learned man—one who has long and deeply studied his subject, and who writes because he really has something to say about it. It reads rather like the work of a learned recluse who has given himself up completely to the study of original records, and has thought very little about what modern scholars are doing. Dean Milman's book is not only valuable for its own sake, but also as the best possible guide to the whole literature of the subject, old and new. But in the present volume we do not remember one reference on Mr. Greenwood's part either to Dean Milman or to Sir Francis Palgrave, though both have gone over so much of the same ground as himself. We can quite fancy that he has been so busy with the

original authors as really not to have read their writings. We are quite sure, from the whole tone of his work, that no unworthy motive has led to the suppression of their names.

Without committing ourselves to Mr. Greenwood's sceptical theories (propounded in his first volume) respecting the earliest foundation of the Christian Church at Rome, we may say unreservedly that the merits of his present volume—which gives the ecclesiastical history of the Carolingian age—are very great. He is learned, thoughtful, and sensible; his English, for the nineteenth century, is above par; he writes in a candid and dispassionate spirit; and he has worked out some parts of his subject more fully than any preceding English writer known to us. But with all this, there is something awkward and ponderous about his treatment of his subject. He has little notion of method and arrangement, and still less of vivid and graphic description and narration. We do not know how far Dean Milman goes down with the "general reader"—to the scholar he is not only profitable but delightful. Though perpetually stumbling—by mere momentary thoughtlessness, we take it—in points of detail, no one can give a truer picture either of a man or an age. So, though half his sentences, if you come to parse them, are ungrammatical, yet no man's style is, in its general effect, clearer or more attractive. Turn from Dean Milman to Mr. Greenwood, and the latter seems almost repulsive—not from any inferiority in his materials, but simply from lack of art to do justice to them. We feel at once that Dean Milman's book is one for educated men in general—Mr. Greenwood's for those only who specially devote themselves to the history of the ninth and tenth centuries. Dean Milman's book has most properly been made a text-book in the Oxford schools; but no one would think of proposing Mr. Greenwood's for such a purpose. The two authors cannot even be made to sit side by side with equal honours, like Bishop Thirlwall and Mr. Grote in the domain of Grecian history. The ninth and tenth centuries form a very important part of European history. It is one much less known and understood than it ought to be, and we would gladly see a greater number of minds devote themselves to its study. To those who feel a special call that way, we can sincerely recommend *Cathedra Petri* as a very valuable help. Of course we cannot venture to recommend it to readers for mere amusement. We cannot even do so to those who study history in a more general manner, or to those who, specially devoting themselves to earlier or later periods, may not care to read more than one book about the Carolingian Kings and the contemporary Popes.

One cause of the superior attractiveness of Dean Milman's book is its essentially biographical character. Leo and Innocent and Gregory the Great, a later Gregory and a later Innocent, St. Thomas of Canterbury and Frederick the Second, all stand out in his pages as living and breathing men. Again, the Dean has a most remarkable power of dealing with the more purely literary portions of his subject—witness his analysis of Piers Ploughman and of Æneas Sylvius—witness, above all, his life of Peter Abelard, where the biographical and the literary interest are combined. Of this kind of power Mr. Greenwood has not a shadow. His characters rise and fall without exciting any emotion whatever. The present volume gives us only a sort of retrospect of Charles the Great, and concludes somewhere before the rise of Hildebrand. It therefore hardly introduces us to any character of the first order. But Pope Nicholas and Pope Hadrian, Hincmar and Photius, Otto the Great and his grandson, have quite enough personal interest about them to be invested with a good deal of life in the hands of an historian capable of conveying it. Sir Francis Palgrave has given too much rather than too little to a great many even of their minor contemporaries. But they pass over Mr. Greenwood's canvas in a very uncertain form indeed. But if Mr. Greenwood is not well qualified to be the biographer of heroes, he is emphatically qualified to be the historian of laws. The most valuable part of the present volume is the account of the False Decretals. These Dean Milman dismisses with a very short notice. Mr. Greenwood explains, far more fully, their origin and nature, and the deeply important effects of the monstrous fiction upon the opinions and legislation of the age. Again, we are inclined to think that the Photian controversy and the career of Hincmar come out, not indeed as pieces of biography, but as chapters in the history of ecclesiastical legislation, in a fuller and more satisfactory form in Mr. Greenwood's pages than in those of Dean Milman. In short, there is a vast deal in Mr. Greenwood's volume which the advanced scholar will thoroughly appreciate, and will be very thankful to him for setting before him so fully, and indeed so clearly to those who are content to take a little trouble about what they read.

The forgery of the Decretals and the Photian controversy are the two great points of purely ecclesiastical interest coming within the limits of the present volume. Generally, the ecclesiastical history of this age is subordinate to the secular. And a political history of the ninth and tenth centuries is of the very highest moment. It is from this period that the definite existence of the principal European nations is to be dated. The great Frankish, Carolingian, or Western-Roman Empire is broken up into the four kingdoms of Western France, Eastern France or Germany, Italy, and Burgundy. The Eastern-Roman Empire may be set down as becoming, during the same period, definitively Greek. The Greek Church and the Greek nation are now finally divorced from Western Christendom, and Rome

* *Cathedra Petri*: a Political History of the Great Latin Patriarchate. Books VI., VII., and VIII. By Thomas Greenwood, M.A., Barrister-at-Law. London: Thickbroom Brothers. 1859.

and Constantinople become the seat of rival spiritual powers. Towards the close of Mr. Greenwood's period, Poland and Russia first appear as Christian States—the one a spiritual conquest of the old Rome, and the other of the new. In our own corner of Europe, the kingdoms of England, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway are each consolidated out of various petty principalities; while one Scandinavian horde grows up into the Latinized Normans of Gaul. In Spain, the Christians are beginning to regain ground against their Saracen conquerors. We may add, though beyond the limits of Europe and of Christendom, that the power gained during the ninth century by the Turks over the Bagdad Caliphate was the source of very important events to come. It was at once the remote cause of the Crusades and the remote origin of the Ottoman Empire. In short, it was during this period that the map of Europe began to contain those great geographical divisions which it still retains. During the same period we find the first small beginnings of modern European literature. In Northern Europe, we now find specimens of the tongues which were to grow into modern German, English, and Danish. In the South, we meet with indications that French, Provençal, and Italian were beginning to show themselves as popular languages distinct from the Latin. We might add that in this age, or before this age, the present pronunciation of Greek was fully fixed. We owe our knowledge of this curious fact to the happy accident that Bishop Liudprand of Cremona had learned a little Greek, and only a little. Had he either known none at all, or as much as Photius, we might have been left in the dark.

It is clear from all this that the ninth and tenth centuries form a very important part of European history—more important as the groundwork of what came after than for what actually happened within its own limits. And yet at least no Englishman and no German ought to look with indifference upon the ages which produced Alfred and Æthelstan, Henry the Fowler and Otto the Great. And just now the study of the political geography of that age might do a little practical good. We have heard a good deal about natural boundaries—about the boundary of the Alps, and the boundary of the Rhine. What would the Great Nation say if asked to change a single letter, and to accept the Rhone instead? The study of these two particular centuries happens to be specially necessary to correct the mistakes into which people are led by the use of the ambiguous word "France." These mistakes, we feel quite sure, have considerably tended to lessen the amount of European indignation at the various encroachments of the Parisian monarchy, from the acquisition of Lyons to that of Savoy. We say the Parisian monarchy, because we want some name to distinguish modern France, Western France, *Francia Latina* or *Occidentalis*, from the old Frankish monarchy, which was most truly continued in Eastern France, *Francia Teutonica* or *Orientalis*—that is to say, the Kingdom of Germany. Parisian France has, in truth, nothing to do with the monarchy of Clovis or with that of Charles the Great. It dates from the division of the Empire in 888, when a Count of Paris first became King. The first century of its existence is a period of shifting and struggle between the Capetian Kings (to speak by anticipation) at Paris and the Carolingian Kings at Laon. From 987, the Parisian monarchy has continued without change of place till our own day. Changes into Republics and Empires have only made it more strictly Parisian than it was before. Since 888 and 987 its limits have wonderfully advanced. Its successive annexations are no more blameworthy than those of other States. Only let them rest boldly on the undeniable tendency of every nation to annex all it can—not on lying perversions of history and geography. The modern French monarchy is in no possible sense the heir of the Merovingian or Carolingian Franks. It has no natural claim to one boundary more than another. It has followed the natural instinct of other monarchies by swallowing up nearly all Burgundy and a great slice of Germany. There is nothing peculiarly monstrous in this—what is peculiarly monstrous is the impudent theorizing by which it is defended. Why the Alps and the Rhine, more than any other boundaries? Why not the Adriatic and the Elbe? It is as easy to say one as the other, and the Empire of Charlemagne reached to both. Saxony and Bavaria are not more German than Alsace; and, after a few centuries of Prefects and Departments, it will be as easy to call Italian "bad French," as it now is to call Provençal. A language whose common vocabulary expresses political burglary by the word "reunion" is cut out for the purposes of aggressors.

On these points, of course, Mr. Greenwood's *Cathedra Petri* does not directly enter. But, as he does in a way record the breaking up of the Carolingian Empire, his narrative forces this line of thought upon every reader who has his eyes open. His account of this great revolution is not very clear or distinct, and we are not sure that he always fully grasps the grand outline, though he has carefully studied the details of the political history of the time. But he ventures on two or three mild protests against fashionable Gallicisms. He uses the correct form "Carolingian," instead of the absurd blunder of "Carlovingian;" he regrets the custom of calling Karl der Grosse "Charlemagne," which is easily avoided by saying, in plain English, "Charles the Great." He construes, like a man, "Hludowicus Pius," by "Louis (why not Lewis?) the Pious," instead of the silly "Louis-le-Debonnaire." And we respect him still more for restoring another monarch to his true spelling. In Teutonic history, as well as in nursery tales, we meet with a Teutonic prince called

"Rex Pippinus," or "King Pippin." Frenchmen have thought proper to degrade him into "Pépin-le-Bref." Mr. Greenwood boldly gives us King Pippin in his proper shape.

We will now mention one or two points where Mr. Greenwood has either fallen into positive errors or has spoken in a way which, to say the least, puzzles us. The Byzantine history, like so many other writers, he misunderstands and undervalues. "The imbecile Heraclius" (p. 46) is a strange epithet for the conqueror of Persia. "Leo the Arminian" (p. 50) is doubtless a misprint; but it has so odd a look that we wonder Mr. Greenwood happened to pass it in correcting his proof. It is hardly fair to draw a picture of Nikephoros Phokas purely from the virulent abuse of Liudprand. The man who recovered Crete, Tarsus, and Antioch to Christendom could not be quite so contemptible as Mr. Greenwood seems to think. And even in Western matters we find several slips. In p. 522-3 we find several mistakes close together. "Charles (d'Outremer) son of Charles the Simple," instead of Lewis; though directly after he is "the unfortunate Louis IV." We do not exactly see why the Count of Paris should bear the Danish title of Earl. Otto the Great was not "Emperor" so early as 946, nor was Lewis his "son-in-law" (p. 523), but his brother-in-law. In p. 234, an elaborate distinction (designed, perhaps, for the benefit of King Victor Emmanuel) is drawn between the title of "King of the Lombards" and that of "King of Italy." Pope Sergius and the Romans recognised Lewis (the Emperor Lewis II., son of Lothar) as King of the Lombards, but not as King of Italy. We suppose Mr. Greenwood has some authority for this; but we can find none in the only reference he gives us—the Life of Sergius by Anastasius (Mur. *Rer. It. Scriptt.* iii. 228). There the Pope gives the "excellētissimus Rex Hludovicus" the royal unction as King of the Lombards—"Regem Longobardis perfecti;" but we find nothing about any other title being claimed or refused. Again, in p. 338, Mr. Greenwood tells us that, in 876 or 877 the Emperor Charles the Bald appointed Count Boso of Provence as his Viceroy in Italy. His reference is to the Annals of Regino. But Regino makes Charles make Boso not Viceroy, but King. No particular name of his kingdom is added; but we take it to have been Provence, because, in 879, we read:—

Boso (de quo paulo superius mentionem fecimus) audita morte Ludovici [Baldi sc.] à Provinciâ egreditur, totamque Burgundiam occupare nititur.

Then follows the account of his coronation at Lyons as King of Burgundy.

However, any small slips of this kind are amply redeemed by such a passage as the following:—

Germany had, from the foundation of the empire, been regarded as the fatherland of the noble race of the Franks. That extensive region was known by the general name of Francia Orientalis, or Eastern France, and in the national contemplation was always regarded as the proper cradle of the race and nation. The kings of that vast region regarded themselves as the representatives of the Frankish monarchy; nor did the extinction of the Carolingian dynasty make any change in this lofty opinion of their own heritable prerogative. The descendants of Conrad of Franconia, it is true, had not a drop of Carolingian blood in their veins; yet he and his successors still believed themselves entitled to all the rights of the legitimate heirs and successors of Charlemagne.

Mr. Greenwood has probably learned by this time that he is writing only for a small and special class. By that class he ought to be valued; but we regret that so thoroughly learned and sensible a book should be so very unattractive in form, as Dean Milman has shown that there is nothing in the subject itself to prevent its assuming an interest altogether fascinating.

STORIED TRADITIONS OF SCOTTISH LIFE.*

WHATEVER may be its other titles to fame, Scotland is pre-eminently the land of good stories. Pleasant Scotchmen are the best company in the world. Their anecdotes are good, and their way of telling them is better. Being perfectly confident that their story must be successful, they are able to amuse because they seem to be able, and small jokes are lighted up with a handsome glow by the inborn drollery of the storyteller. A real Scotch story told by an Englishman is an utter failure—there is simply no point whatever in it. It is no more like the original than the Delphin paraphrase is like Virgil. Let an Englishman, for example, try to tell such a story as that of the Scotch judge who crossed a river and lost his wig. His servant found a wig caught by a bough in the stream, and brought it to his master, who doubted whether it was the right one. To which the servant replied, "There is nae wale of wigs in the Tweed." This story, put nakedly on paper or told by an Englishman, is as stupid an anecdote as was ever told; but if told by a grave Scotchman, with an eye twinkling with fun in the midst of a solemn face, and as certain his story is pointed as that he is mortal, it will serve as a perfect test to bring out all the sense of fun that lies in his auditors. But besides stories which are flavoured with a peculiar dry humour, and require a Scotch narrator, there are thousands of stories which depend for their effect only on the incidents they contain, and which have been treasured up in Scotland with the tenacity belonging to a small society each member of which takes the deepest interest in all the rest. There is nothing very wonderful in these stories taken separately; but there is just enough to make them worth

* *Curious Storied Traditions of Scottish Life.* By Alexander Leighton. Edinburgh: Nimmo. 1860.

telling, and to make them effective when well told. Mr. Leighton, in the little volume which he calls *Storied Traditions of Scottish Life*, has collected nine or ten of them, and has told them very clearly and effectively. The point which they almost all have in common is that there is some little mystery in the circumstances as at first presented, and this mystery is cleared up by very obvious causes. The stories are thus made to hang together, and as Mr. Leighton has had the good sense always to stop when he has come to the end of what he had to say, the volume makes an excellent whole.

Three of the stories turn upon facts at first taken to be supernatural, and then rationalized by the supernatural agents being discovered to be perfectly natural rogues. The first is called the "Ten of Diamonds." A gambler has cheated a companion by concealing the ten of diamonds about his person. Afterwards he is filled with remorse, and he is haunted by the vision of the card that was the instrument of his crime. His little daughter has her fortune told by a gipsy. The woman produces a ten of diamonds in order to decipher the child's future. He walks in a wood at night, and there is an enormous and fiery ten of diamonds staring at him through the darkness. His wife has a little boy born, and the ten of diamonds is found printed on the baby's back. At last the mystery is cleared up. A gambling companion was aware of the haunted man's crime, and of his remorse, and as he had seen the card that was the instrument of fraud, he thought that it might be used to harass the repentant sinner into giving a sum as conscience-money to the widow of the man he had defrauded, which sum the schemer had made arrangements to intercept. The gipsy was of course his accomplice, the apparition in the wood was produced by a magic-lantern, and the doctor who attended on the lady had stamped the baby's back with a piece of painted rag. "Sergeant Davie's Ghost" is even more decidedly of a seemingly supernatural character. It is the most elaborate story in the volume, and is one of the best; but perhaps it would be more effective to Scotchmen than to Englishmen. There are little obscurities in it to a Southerner. The principal character in it, for example, Sandy Macpherson, is suddenly called MacGillas, and we are supposed to understand at once, and without further explanation, that they are the same person. Of course this, to a Scotchman, would probably be obvious, but to an Englishman it is rather puzzling. The ghost is the ghost of an English sergeant, and appears to two Highlanders to say that he has been murdered by two men, one of whom is named Duncan Clerk. The Highlanders firmly believe in their ghost, and raise the country with their talk. As there are some corroborating circumstances to inculpate Duncan Clerk, he and his alleged accomplice are tried, but are acquitted. Duncan Clerk leaves the country and is drowned. The villain of the story, Allan Macnab, then goes to Clerk's widow, an old flame of his own, and offers to gratify her vengeance against Sandy Macpherson, (*i.e.*, Mac Gillas) by indicting him for perjury. She catches at the offer, but declares that she cannot reward Macnab in the way he wishes. The supernatural screw has therefore to be applied to her too. As she walks by moonlight alone, the ghost of Duncan Clerk appears to her, and generously bids her accept Macnab as the proper successor to himself. She is, however, a sharp woman, and her suspicions having been previously excited, she seizes on the ghost, and detects in it her villainous lover, who, having personated Sergeant Davie's ghost with such success, hoped to have equal luck in the character of a man whom his first appearance as a ghost was designed to get hanged. The third of these seemingly supernatural stories is of less interest. It turns on the appearance of a ghost, night after night, to the sentry of a regiment. The lieutenant is zealous in trying to discover the mystery, and sets man after man to watch. All concur in saying that the ghost has appeared, and at last one of them plunges his bayonet into the ghost, who flits gently by without minding it. The doctor, however, next morning, being called in for some other purpose, finds that the lieutenant's back is scored as by the passing over it of a sharp instrument, and it turns out that the ghost is the lieutenant himself, who has been walking in his sleep.

There are two other stories in which there is a mystery, but not a supernatural one. The first is called "A Knife Thrust in the Dark." A wild lad being threatened by his father with punishment runs away from home, and having only a penny to spend seeks a night's shelter in a low lodging-house. He is tormented by sounds of scuffling and fighting in the floor above him, and at last, in his anger at being kept awake, he takes the opportunity of a heavy body being thrown on the floor exactly above his head, and drives his long knife through a chink into the disturber of his rest. A stream of blood gushes down through the chink upon his shirt. He is terrified with the thought of the deed he has done, and lets himself down out of the window and hurries wildly through the streets until he reaches Leith, and, seeing the sea before him, determines to cleanse himself from the blood that is sticking to him. He has just thrown off the shirt when he hears footsteps, and thinking he is pursued, makes off as fast as he can. In the morning he goes to the house of an uncle, and is admitted. Soon he hears a cry in the street, telling how a foul murder has been discovered. By and bye, the tell-tale shirt is found on the shore, and as it is marked with his name he is instantly suspected. He is, however, kept in hiding by his relations, who firmly believe

in his guilt, as also does he himself. At length the authorities get a clue to the real author of the murder that has been committed, and it comes out that the people in the floor above the runaway were sheepstealers, and that the body into which the lad had plunged his knife was that of a sheep. "The Long Slippers" is a story of a wonderful pair of slippers, red turned up with blue, and a yellow bow in front, that were ordered by a stranger one night of an Edinburgh cobbler, and were to be of the extraordinary length of eighteen inches. Some students got to hear of this, and their curiosity was excited. They watched to find who would call for the slippers, and were rewarded by seeing a carriage drive to the shoemaker's, in which, by listening at the door, they found a woman was concealed, and stray sentences they overheard intimated that the woman was complaining of being always shut up in a confinement that was disagreeable to her. When the carriage stopped, the students, who had followed it, were accosted by a strange man in a velvet coat, who was at first very discouraging in his replies. But at length, on receiving a consideration, he told them it was quite true that the lady was habitually shut up, and that she wore slippers a foot and a half in length. He refused to say more then, but arranged that they should meet him the next day at a certain place in the busiest part of Edinburgh. On their arrival they saw that the spot was unusually crowded. A great caravan had arrived; and in the showman of the caravan they discovered their velvet-coated friend, and in the Royal Westmoreland Giantess their mysterious beauty with "the long slippers."

Some of the stories relate incidents of a curious kind that have formed the subject of inquiry in criminal courts of justice. The first story in the book is called the White Scalp. A blacksmith had an intrigue with a woman somewhat advanced in life. They met one moonlight night in the blacksmith's shop. All else was in shade, but the light streamed fully down on the white and polished surface of the blacksmith's bald head. Suddenly a heavy instrument came out of the darkness and fell on the "white scalp." The blacksmith fell dead on the spot. No one was seen to do the deed, nor were there any traces of the murderer, excepting that a hundred yards from the shop a man's hat was picked up. As there was no one else to suspect, suspicion fell on the blacksmith's wife, as she had the provocation of her husband's infidelity to suggest a motive for the crime. She was tried and acquitted. Years after, on his death-bed, the son of the blacksmith's paramour confessed that he had committed the murder in order to stop an intrigue that was disgraceful to her. The only point in the story consists in the melodramatic and accidental circumstance of the manner of the murder, and of the blow being directed by the light falling on the murdered man's head. The interest is better sustained in "The Chance Question." A detective employed to trace the authors of a robbery of plate and jewellery was thoroughly baffled. After a long search of several days, he was quite worn out, and was going home to bed when he met a girl, a perfect stranger to him, and, without having any clue or any purpose in asking, inquired of her whether she happened to know any one in the neighbourhood who mended rings. She said there was a Jew named Abram who mended rings; and as they passed Abram's shop, pointed him out as he was sitting at work. The officer asked Abram whether he could mend a ring, and produced one that was companion ring to one of the rings stolen. The Jew shuffled in his answer; and the officer, beginning to examine the shop, saw some coarse engravings pasted on the wall. One of these represented the hiding of the cup in Benjamin's sack, and the thought entered the officer's head what a curious coincidence it would be if this representation of concealed treasure was itself a blind to conceal real treasure. Of course this turns out to be the case; and the means by which the officer works to get the gang into his clutches are set out with great minuteness and skill. For a criminal story, it is excellent. But the most curious story of criminal life in the collection is one called "The Woman with the White Mice." This is curious because Mr. Leighton appears to be giving a narrative of facts which have happened within the memory of many of his readers; and yet, if he is speaking of real persons and real facts, he is accusing persons, whose names must be well known in Scotland, of a complicated fraud in order to conceal a murder. The wife of a respectable farmer was taken into custody for the murder of a girl of low condition, who had had a love-affair with the farmer's son. The farmer came to consult a well-known writer, who saw at once that the farmer's wife was guilty, and that she would be hanged if something were not contrived to defeat justice. It appeared that a tramp, carrying white mice, had been seen at the farmer's shortly before the murder. The writer tracked her out, and bargained with her that, for a hundred pounds, she should come into Court and accuse herself of the murder. This she did, and the farmer's wife was acquitted. The woman with the white mice was conveyed, immediately after giving her evidence, to a carriage that was waiting outside for her, and escaped in safety out of the country. Mr. Leighton tells us that the defence of the real murderers, in a speech of six hours, was one of Lord Jeffrey's greatest efforts, and that he suffered greatly from the consequences of the physical exertion it cost him. Everything is told as if it were notoriously the record of a real case. But if so, we can hardly understand how Mr. Leighton can have ventured to print such grave charges against persons, who, if not living, must, in all probability, have left living representatives. However, that is his affair and not ours. For the sake of the book,

we hope that this story is true, because the interest of these traditions of Scottish life would be greatly diminished unless we considered ourselves justified in believing that the main facts narrated had really happened.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION OF 1789.*

NO apology was needed for the attempt to supply a popular history of the French Revolution. The subject has been treated, indeed, more or less fully, by an immense variety of writers, and discussed from every political point of view; yet its interest and significance are very far from being exhausted. Personal memoirs and contemporaneous papers are still accumulating, fresh light has been thrown on its antecedents by the study of the previous period, and every year adds to the marvellous train of its effects. A graphic and accurate account, within the limits of a single volume, was still a desideratum, whether the facts were to be "viewed in the light of Republican Institutions" or in any other light. Yet such a title savours of a challenge, and the antagonism of a monarchical reader might fairly be roused when he is told that he "will not be surprised to find that some occurrences which historians caressed in regal courts and baronial halls have denounced as insolent and vulgar, are here represented as heroic and noble." Our first objection to such language is, that it is wholly "uncalled-for." The best-known of the French historians of the Revolution are probably Mignet, Michelet, and Thiers. The last was the son of a working locksmith, and certainly has never, through all the phases of his unprincipled career, been accused of truckling to aristocratic prejudices. The two former belong to the professional class, and incurred respectively the displeasure of the Governments of Charles X. and Louis Philippe for the expression of ultra-liberal opinions. The late Professor Smyth, from whose lectures Mr. Abbott has borrowed largely, was a singularly honest, though cautious, Liberal, quite innocent of living in "baronial halls." We shall not insult or amuse Mr. Carlyle by defending him against such an imputation. Mr. Croker and Sir A. Alison must, we suppose, be left to Mr. Abbott's mercy, though we may fairly commend to the imitation of Republican historians the minute research of the one, and the ponderous industry of the other. We believe, upon the whole, that the story of the French Revolution has much oftener been distorted by the arts of the modern fatalist school, and the fascinations of an immoral aestheticism, than by the wildest denunciations of the friends of humanity and order.

But, secondly, we protest on behalf of Mr. Abbott himself against the suspicion, suggested by his own words, that he writes in the spirit of a partisan. On the contrary, we give him credit for having studied impartiality, while he has not stifled his indignation in the presence of those enormous crimes which some have wantonly attributed to an uncontrollable tide of moral necessity, and which Mr. Carlyle, with his passion for the tragico-grotesque, has treated as a kind of frightful melodrama. We charge him, however, with a silly hostility to the institutions of this country which was assuredly not shared by the great patriots of the National Assembly, most of whom had visited England and imbibed their notions of liberty from our literature—which Jefferson, if he felt it, was able to suppress, when he recommended our Constitution as a model to La Fayette and his friends—and which is less a principle than a trick with this author himself, since it is contrary to the spirit of his avowed sentiments. What can be the object of giving in a note, *à propos* of nothing, a very incorrect analysis of the English peerage concluding thus:—"The English say these nobles are exceedingly valuable. They ought to be. They cost enough?" Michelet, he tells us, in another note, "remarks with much truth," that "to be rich in order to be noble is the absorbing thought of the Englishman." Burke is, of course, the object of his peculiar aversion, and he really seems to think that his "Reflections" share with the "gold of Pitt" the responsibility of causing the later excesses of the Revolution. The futile expedition to La Vendée, which Mr. Abbott selects as an act about the justice of which Royalists and Republicans must for ever differ, appears to us a most ordinary exercise of the rights of war, neither more nor less justifiable than the two French attempts on Ireland, or their project of rousing Hungary in their late contest with Austria. Nor were the "liberty-loving Englishmen," whose insults against the King and Pitt Mr. Abbott treats as a national protest, more than a small faction. The perpetual antithesis of the "Government" and the "people" of England is peculiarly inapplicable to this period, inasmuch as it thrusts into the shade the national antipathy to France and French institutions, which was too strong for the originally pacific intentions of Pitt, and the resistance to which cost Fox more than half his Parliamentary following.

Availing himself of M. de Tocqueville's guidance, Mr. Abbott presents us with a graphic picture of the misery of the lower classes under the old régime. He carries back his retrospect to the early days of the French monarchy, and traces the growth of corruption and mal-administration to that portentous crisis of affairs which gave rise to Lord Chesterfield's memorable prediction, when "for half a century France was governed by prostitutes." Often as the revolting degradation of France during

her so-called golden age has been depicted, we think Mr. Abbott has done wisely in prefixing to the history of the Revolution the history of the Bastille and the *Parc aux Cerfs*—of profligacy the most shameless, hand-in-hand with intolerance the most pitiless—of taxation borne exclusively by the poor—of all, in short, that made the horrors of Terrorism not indeed "inevitable," but a stroke of that infernal justice which the Greeks embodied in their conception of the Furies.

Of the many causes that contributed to the atrocity of the Revolution in its final stage, Mr. Abbott seems to recognise but three; for the example of America, and the accident of a scanty harvest, can hardly be considered as more than predisposing circumstances. These three are—the enormities of the monarchy under the four preceding reigns, the weakness and infatuation of the King and the Court party, and the disturbance produced by foreign interference. Describing the outrages heaped upon the Royal Family in the Temple, he says:—

The recital of such conduct makes the blood boil in one's veins, and leads one almost to detest the very name of liberty. But then we must not forget that it was despotism which formed these hideous characters; that age after age, and century after century, kings and nobles had been trampling upon the people, crushing their rights, lacerating their heart-strings, dooming fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, by millions upon millions, to beggary, degradation, and woe.

Again, he repeatedly asserts that, had the King been more firm, had the Queen been of a less haughty temper, had the courtiers been less extravagant in their loyal demonstrations, had correspondence with foreign Powers been abandoned, the worst might have been averted. He even attributes to the Royalists a design "to excite insurrection (by means of their emissaries), to stimulate the mob to all brutality, that the Revolution might have an infamous name through Europe, and might be execrated in France." Upon the third point, the most hackneyed of all the apologies for Jacobinism, he insists with superfluous earnestness. We select one out of several passages:—

But when all the surrounding despots combined and put their armies in motion to invade France, determined that the French people should not be free, and when the aristocracy of France combined with these foreign invaders to enslave anew those millions who had just broken their chains, a spirit of desperation was roused which led to all the woes which ensued. We cannot tell what would have been the result had there not been the combination of these foreign kings, but we do know that the results which *did* ensue were the direct and legitimate consequence of that combination.

To criticise fully the value of statements such as these would not only be to write afresh the whole history of the Revolution, but to waste time in establishing much that is now generally recognised. Mr. Abbott really does not seem aware of the existing state of European opinion on this subject. No reasonable man would now describe, with Burke, the régime of Louis XV., of Madame de Pompadour and Madame Dubarry, as "a despotism rather in appearance than in reality." No one, with heart enough to admire Hampden and Washington, would vilify La Fayette as a "horrid ruffian," or attribute the virtues of chivalry to the effete and corrupt French aristocracy. Few, except the recent biographer of Mr. Rose, justify our having entered, even under gross provocation, into that war which certainly became a war against French politics, as well as against French aggression. But, on the other hand, it must be remembered that the old régime had been absolutely swept away before the crimes now excused by the necessity of subverting it were committed. Several nobles were among the earliest supporters of the Revolution. It was not till after the memorable night of August 4th, when feudal rights were destroyed with a stroke of the pen, that the châteaux were fired. It was not till after the King had virtually surrendered his sovereignty that the idea of treating him as a tyrant was conceived. If revenge was the grand motive of revolutionary violence, how is it that it did not reach its height till it had destroyed all its legitimate enemies, and had none but friends to devour? If the fear of foreign invasion inspired the September massacre, why were the inmates of the prisons, no longer capable of co-operating with the allied Powers, the only victims? The notorious fact, however, is—and these pages amply confirm it—that the character of the Revolution was determined at a very early stage. That character was impressed upon it by mob-violence, excited by famine. In the insane persecution of the corn-dealers, in the tumultuous meetings in the Palais Royal, in the insolent dictation of the populace to the National Assembly, in the fact that the murder of François was "the only murder perpetrated by a Parisian mob during the Revolution which the law was sufficiently powerful to punish," in the disgust and despair early felt and expressed by such men as La Fayette, Bailly, and Mirabeau, and in the unscrupulous propagandism of insurrectionary doctrines among foreign nations, we must seek the true and adequate origin of the evils which subsequently befel France. When we find the name of Pitt on the dying lips of Mirabeau, of Desmoulins, of Marat, and of Robespierre, we smile at the vagueness of those terrors which have been made the excuse for every crime, but which shrouded themselves in the mystery of a common bugbear.

Adopting the most favourable hypothesis, it must ever remain a disgrace to the French nation that they were so long cowed by a knot of agitators, numerically small, wholly deficient in real political courage, altogether second-rate in intellectual powers and cultivation, feminine in their vanity, in their sentimental extravagance, and in their cruelties, and formidable only in their ruthless fanaticism. It is equally necessary to the argument of the anti-Revolutionists of 1789-96 and to the modern apologists

* *The French Revolution of 1789 as viewed in the light of Republican Institutions.* By John S. C. Abbott. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1859.

of the Revolution, to represent the faction of Robespierre and the Jacobins as an insignificant minority—the only alternative being that of Croker, who charges the whole French people with participation, through public opinion, with their blackest enormities. There is but too much evidence on both sides. On the one hand, there are the reactionary movements in the provinces, only quelled by military force—the anti-Jacobin sentiments of the army itself when removed from the maddening intoxication of Paris—the body-guard which was necessary to the personal safety of Robespierre—the easy victory of the Thermidorians, headed by a few resolute men—and the success of Napoleon's celebrated "whiff of grape-shot." When we read of men hardened in murder and women who had danced round the guillotine, soundly belaboured by the truncheons of the "gilded youth," we are reminded of the bullies of a past generation, valiant enough against decrepit "Charles," but scarcely venturing an encounter with stout young policemen. And yet, on the other hand, there is a solemnity and deliberation in the revolutionary measures—a perfect self-consciousness in all the actors—a steady progress in atrocity till the very apostles of massacre and spoliation were stigmatized as "moderates" by their successors—an abstinence, in the impeachment of Robespierre himself, from all reference to humanity or individual interests—which point to another solution, and that the least favourable of any to the French character. Mr. Abbott tells us that Robespierre, who could will that the French should "recognise the existence of a Supreme Being," "did not dare to bring an act of accusation against the wretch (Carrier), lest he should peril his own head by being charged with sympathy with the Royalists." Nothing can better illustrate that strange incapacity for freedom, that poverty in all the political virtues, which has characterized the French at all periods of their history, than the natural and regular way in which they accommodated themselves to the Terrorist system. The Coreyean Revolution may supply a faint parallel, but we doubt whether heathen Rome or any other nation of Christian Europe ever sunk for months and years together to that point of demoralization which alone could make such things possible. Well may Mr. Abbott say, that "there was a cowardly spirit impelling these massacres. He alone was safe from suspicion who was merciless in denunciation of the suspected. *It is, however, remarkable that nearly all the actors in these scenes of blood, even in the hour of death, protested their conscientiousness and their integrity.*" Perhaps the best palliation to be found for such men (and it is one of sad significance), is in the quasi-religious enthusiasm that pervaded the whole movement—a feature first clearly discerned by De Tocqueville, though it was indicated at the time in the sagacious remark of Fromont:—"Religious zeal alone can stifle the Republican mania."

Mr. Abbott has endorsed an old paradox of Carlyle, when he urges that "deplorable as was the condition of France during the Reign of Terror, even that reign was far more endurable by the masses of the people than the domination of the old feudal despotism." We are not concerned to prove that it was not, though we utterly disbelieve the fact. But, granting it, who will maintain that the permanent injury inflicted on a people by Terrorism, and the shock to their moral feelings, is not infinitely more deadly than that inflicted by passive oppression? On the same principle, it may be argued that religion suffers more from indifference than from persecution. But let Terrorism or religious persecution become general in any country, and it will soon be deserted by all its best citizens.

We have dwelt at disproportionate length on these disputed points, both because Mr. Abbott invites an examination of them by his title-page and preface, and because he scarcely professes to throw any new light on the facts of the Revolution. It is due to him, however, to say that he has on the whole shown judgment in the selection, and skill in the description of its great incidents—that he has introduced valuable quotations from original sources, such as the *Conversations of Napoleon at St. Helena*—and that he sustains the interest of his narrative throughout. We could have desired the same distinctness in the account of the perplexing campaigns of the Republican generals which we find in that of domestic events. Nothing can be better sketched than some of those Revolutionary scenes, most of which, in Mr. Abbott's language, "seem to have been arranged on the sublimest scale." We recommend especially the flight of the Royal Family to Varennes, the picture of the Queen's heroism in the attack on the Tuileries and at her execution, and the terrible night of Robespierre's fall. Mr. Abbott is not a profound or very critical author; but he writes like a man who sincerely believes in the Divine government of the world and the responsibility of human actions, and this is no unwise or unseasonable attitude for an historian of the French Revolution.

SECRETAN'S LIFE OF ROBERT NELSON.*

"THE pious" Robert Nelson, as he was called by his contemporaries, was the ideal or typical layman of the Church of England of the close of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the following one, and his name has lived in the affectionate memory of his co-religionists ever since. It is

* *Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Pious Robert Nelson.* By the Rev. C. F. Secretan, M.A., Incumbent of Holy Trinity, Westminster. London: Murray, 1860.

curious that his life has never been made the subject of a formal biography till now. We know, indeed, that his friend, Dr. Francis Lee, a physician, promised a memoir of Robert Nelson soon after his decease, in 1714; but his own somewhat sudden death at Gravelines, in 1719, left the task uncompleted, and his collection of letters and papers has disappeared. So that, with the exception of a few biographical sketches which have appeared from time to time, the field was left open for Mr. Secretan's labours and inquiries. The result of these is a volume which, in spite of every desire to take an interest in the subject, we find somewhat wearisome and heavy. And this is the more remarkable, because Robert Nelson's life, though not an eventful one, coincided with a very interesting period of our political and religious history; and his character, though perhaps not heroic enough nor sufficiently tried by adversity to command our reverence, was quite engaging enough to win our sympathies. The truth is, Mr. Secretan has fallen into two errors common to biographers. He dwells too much upon details without attempting to blend them into a whole, and he loads with too much praise the subject of his memoir. In revenge for the tedium of this crude array of facts, and this indiscriminate eulogy, the general reader will be likely to undervalue more than it deserves the moral of this good man's life. Old Isaac Walton, in his pleasant *Lives*, has given us a model, not only of the style, but of the length, suitable for religious biographies; and we wish that Mr. Secretan had had the good sense to guide himself by so excellent a precedent.

Robert Nelson was born in London, in 1656, of wealthy parents, and, being their only child who reached maturity, he inherited an ample fortune. He was educated at St. Paul's School, where he made an acquaintance, which ripened into a lifelong friendship, with Halley, the astronomer. He was entered as a fellow-commoner at Trinity College, Cambridge; but it is doubtful whether he ever resided at the University. However, he was fortunate in having the famous Bull, afterwards Bishop of St. David's, but then the curate of a neighbouring parish, for his private tutor in the country; and to him he probably owed not only his very finished education, but the bias of his theological opinions. He began in early life to occupy a high social position, and from the first he was a leader in what would now be called the "religious world." Thus, in one of his letters, dated 1679, we find him telling Dr. Maplet of the beating which Dryden, "your friend and schoolfellow," had just received for the supposed authorship of the famous lampoon against the Duchess of Portsmouth; and in the following year Nelson writes to Tillotson, then Dean of Canterbury, to inquire about some iconoclastic doings in the Cathedral there, which were attributed to the zeal of his latitudinarian friend. Resisting, on conscientious grounds, a tempting offer of a place in the profligate Court of Charles II., Nelson, accompanied by Halley, made the grand tour of Europe. "His own stay at home," says Mr. Secretan—but, from the context, he must mean to say "at Rome"—"is remarkable as procuring him the acquaintance of Lady Theophila Lucy, (widow of Sir Kingsmill Lucy, and daughter of George Earl of Berkeley) who is said to have become so violently enamoured of his person that she could not forbear expressing her affection for him, and who, in the following year, became his wife." This lady, under the influence of Bossuet and Cardinal Howard, subsequently became a Roman Catholic, and her son by the former marriage, Sir Berkeley Lucy, was a professed sceptic. It is a proof of Nelson's amiability of disposition and liberality of views that he did not resent these conversions, although, in his special connexion with the Anglican orthodoxy of that day, they must have been sufficiently annoying to him. His marriage was delayed till the conclusion of the famous trial of Lord Grey of Warke, who, being already married to one sister of Lady Theophila's, eloped with a younger one. Nelson had no children, and his union with his wife lasted three-and-twenty years. The lady was older than her husband—only two years, however, says Mr. Secretan—and her temper must have been doubtful, if we may judge from this awkward compliment of a rhyming eulogist:—

In Lucy's beauty Virtue did appear.
So shone her eyes, such was her voice and air,
Awfully kind, and lovingly severe.

It is well known that a considerable movement towards Romanism set in under the restored Stuarts. There is a most curious work by Peck, lately republished by the Cheetham Society, which gives the titles of the innumerable controversial books and pamphlets published on both sides; and Lord Macaulay has familiarized us with the general course and issue of the struggle. A stream of distinguished converts followed the example of Anne Hyde, the Duchess of York. Mr. Secretan thus describes this fashionable secession:—

James Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, with his countess and his two brothers, deserted the faith of which the founder of the family, Elizabeth's great statesman, had been so sturdy a supporter. Sir Ellis Leighton, the brother of the archbishop, joined the religion of the dominant powers. Sir Thomas Grosvenor lost his lady—the Elizabeth Ebury, who brought the Westminster estates into his family—to the Church that was in fashion at Court. And Samuel Pepys durst not press his wife to go to church, for fear she should "declare herself a Catholicque," and deny him. Peter Manby, the Dean of Londonderry, Slater, the minister of Putney, Charnock and Massey, and Obadiah Walker, the master of University, headed the renegade churchmen, while Dryden and Wycherly brought the homage or the support to their newly-adopted faith which literary ability could offer.

Lady Theophila Nelson not only joined this secession, but justified the step in a clever pamphlet, which extorted an

answer from Sherlock. It was in vain that her husband and Tillotson disputed on the other side. Nelson himself made his first appearance in print about this time in an anonymous pamphlet on Transubstantiation. We quite agree with Mr. Secretan that no severer mental trial could well have befallen him than this religious alienation from his wife, and also that his deliberate adhesion to Anglican doctrine becomes more important when it is recollected how deeply the question concerned him personally. But this might have been expressed better than in this oddly-worded sentence—"The Christian biographer will accept her conversion as part of God's providence for disciplining his soul."

About this time, his wife falling into bad health, Nelson accompanied her to Italy. At Florence, in 1690, he put himself into communication with Lord Melfort, James II.'s Ambassador at Rome, and threw himself with much fervour into the intrigues of the Jacobite party. We have some curious extracts from Melfort's letters, showing what absurd *canards* were current at Rome as to the fortune of war in Ireland. Returning to England in 1691, Nelson found his friend Tillotson enthroned in Sancroft's chair; and as he himself joined the non-juring minority, an interruption of their long intimacy was inevitable. The breach was not healed till the Archbishop was stricken with death. Then Nelson went to Lambeth, watched by his bedside, and held him in his arms while he expired.

It was not till 1709 that, on the death of Bishop Lloyd of Norwich, Nelson returned to communion with the majority of the Church of England. His biographer might have made more, we think, of that curious episode of his life during which he was a lay leader of the non-juring party. In London, his intimate circle comprised Kettlewell and Hickes, Bowdler and Pepys, Collier and Spinckes, Lee and Hilkiah Bedford; and at Shottesbrooke House, in Berkshire, where Francis Cherry so hospitably entertained a knot of the deprived non-juring divines, he used to meet Ken and Dodwell, Leslie and Brokesby. It is said to have been Kettlewell who first suggested to Nelson the idea of writing the *Companion to the Fasts and Festivals*—the work by which he is best known, and which is still a household book of instruction and devotion in the Church of England. Nelson's friendship with Hickes was not interrupted by the consecration of the latter to the suffragan see of Thetford in 1693, nor by his own conformity in 1709. We must make room here for an anecdote about the non-juring lord of Shottesbrooke, whose personal popularity in his neighbourhood was so great, that in spite of his unfashionable opinions, he was called "the idol of Berkshire:"—

His devotion to the Jacobite cause was displayed upon one occasion in a somewhat singular manner. Among the accomplishments on which he prided himself as a country gentleman was his superior horsemanship, the display of which in the hunting-field would sometimes pique the emulation of King William. And Mr. Cherry, observing one day that he was closely pressed by the King, risked his life for the sake of breaking the usurper's neck, and plunged into a frightfully deep and broad part of the Thames, in hope that William might be induced to follow. To the Princess Anne upon a hunting day he would always pay the most particular attention, riding up to her calash; but when she assumed her father's crown, the Queen missed Mr. Cherry from her side, and pointed him out in the distance to her attendants: "There goes one of the honestest gentlemen in my dominions."

The Shottesbrooke non-jurors conformed at the same time with Nelson, on Bishop Lloyd's death—Ken, the only survivor of the deprived bishops, declining to claim their allegiance any longer, and setting his face against the further perpetuation of the schism by the consecration of new bishops. But they were in the habit of expressing their dissent when the royal titles were given to the Queen by the "swearing clergy" in the public prayers of the Church. Thus Cherry, it is said, used to rise from his knees at the name of the Queen, and stand up facing the congregation; while Dodwell, less ostentatiously, used to slide off his hassock. Others, says Mr. Secretan, used merely to rustle violently the leaves of their Prayer Books, so as to drown the offensive words. Nelson's political views were not altered, though he abandoned his non-conformity; and he assisted Hilkiah Bedford in the publication of the treatise on Hereditary Right, for which its author was imprisoned. It was only by Nelson's intercession that he was spared an ignominious addition to the sentence. This Bedford was afterwards consecrated a bishop, so late as 1720, by Hawes, Spinckes, and Gandy.

After his return to the Established communion, Nelson devoted himself with heart and soul to works of charity and beneficence. In particular, he was one of the original founders of the two great religious societies—for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and for the Propagation of the Gospel—which have survived in ever-increasing efficiency to the present day. He left behind him a very curious list of desiderata, which is thus abridged by his biographer:—

To an active part in all these pious undertakings he added a keen and thoughtful appreciation of those religious wants which still remained unprovided, and in his list of charitable works then lacking in our country he included theological seminaries for the clergy; training colleges for the masters and mistresses of the newly founded charity-schools; schools for the "Blackguard Boys" of our streets, equivalent to our Ragged Schools of a subsequent period; special hospitals for particular diseases; penitentiaries for fallen women; a founding hospital for their children; places of religious retirement for the devout; houses of probation for converts from popery or dissent; the appointment of suffragan bishops for the American plantations; and a corporation for the conversion of the Romanists of Ireland.

It is not uninteresting to observe that nearly the whole of this programme has been now carried into effect; and even the religious societies founded in professed imitation of that of St. Vincent de Paul, and which effected so much good in London a century

and a half ago, have of late had a partial revival among us. These religious societies had, however, from the first a too strong political bias, and they were much discouraged by the Hanoverian monarchs. They died out just about the time when Whitefield and Wesley drained off the religious energy of the age into other and hostile channels. The Charity Schools of London, with their quaint dresses and their annual gatherings—first held at St. Sepulchre's, but now at St. Paul's—are a legacy to us from the same age; and Robert Nelson took perhaps the most active part in establishing them, and organizing their meetings. It is in these details, and in his account of Nelson's devotional publications—from which he makes copious extracts—that Mr. Secretan's prolixity is most conspicuous.

Nor do we quite like the apologetic tone of the biographer's chapter on the family relations of his hero. It is quite clear that Nelson was no narrow bigot, but a man of the world, and one who, while he held his own opinions, could respect the differing views of others. It need surprise no one who properly considers Nelson's character that he lived most affectionately with his Romanist wife, and on familiar terms with his Deistical step-son and his dissenting relations on his mother's side. And still less is there any reason for the absurd charge which has been somewhere made that, because he associated with his wife's noble relations, he was a tuft-hunter. He was a man of fortune and education, and of most popular manners; and the society in which he naturally moved embraced almost all the eminent men of his day. Among the letters of his which are preserved we find some to Harley, Anne's Tory Minister, and to Matthew Prior the poet, in which the writer, by the way, shows an entire absence of poetical discrimination. Still more interesting are his relations with Wanley and Grabe, Thoresby, the famous antiquary, and John Johnson, Vicar of Cranbrook, the theologian. It was to Nelson that the famous Bishop of Meaux wrote in such high terms of Bull's great *Judicium*; and their correspondence was kept up till Bossuet's death.

Nelson died in January, 1711, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, at the house of a female cousin at Kensington, attended to the last by his constant friend, Dr. Francis Lee. He was buried in the then new cemetery in Lamb's Conduit-fields, with a grandiloquent Latin epitaph written by his friend Bishop Smalldridge, and left the greater portion of his fortune in various charitable bequests. Such a man well deserves posthumous fame, and we doubt not that Mr. Secretan's memoir, though by no means faultless, will be acceptable in religious circles. We wish he had brought out the curious family likenesses, so to say, which may be observed in the succession of devout laymen who have been nurtured in the Church of England. Other communions may have exhibited more striking instances of Christian heroism or asceticism; but nowhere else do we see in such perfection that peculiar type of practical piety, unpretending munificence, gentleness of temper, and benevolence of disposition—rewarded by a universal respect and deference from their contemporaries which, though fully deserved by their moral qualities, is sometimes quite out of proportion to their intellectual claims—which has been exemplified in Izaak Walton, Robert Nelson, William Wilberforce, William Stevens, and the late Joshua Watson, and of which happily we are not without some living representatives.

SEA WEEDS.*

FOR nearly two thousand years from the time of Aristotle, the study of Natural History made no appreciable progress, until the great Italian naturalists of the sixteenth century began systematically to observe the forms and structure of plants and animals. Since then, the knowledge of the organic world, in its myriad shapes of animal and vegetable life, has continually advanced in those countries where printing and the means of intercourse with other observers have enabled each student of nature to profit by the labour of those who have preceded him. The invention of the microscope threw open to human scrutiny vast regions previously inaccessible, and each successive improvement in the instrument has been followed by a corresponding extension of the naturalist's horizon. It is not only true that we have failed to reach the limit of minuteness in the separate organs of which plants and animals are made up—we have no reason to think that we are yet able to distinguish the creatures themselves that occupy the smallest space on our earth. We have learned to count by millions the shells of *Foraminifera* in a piece of chalk no bigger than the end of a man's finger; but if we possessed a microscope one hundred times more powerful than any yet constructed, there is little doubt that new animated races, whose existence is still unsuspected, would become known to us.

Armed with the weapons of modern science, and urged on by the spirit of inquiry, indefatigable observers have been at work in every accessible part of the world, until few regions remain of which the flora and fauna have not been investigated. Of flowering plants, upwards of 100,000 separate species are more or less perfectly known; and land animals, shells, and insects, have been accumulated in museums in such numbers that laborious men find single tribes more than enough to engage their undi-

* *The Nature-Printed British Sea Weeds.* By Johnstone and Croall. Vols. I. and II. London: Bradbury and Evans.

vided study and research. Although every day proves that, even in the best known districts, there remains full scope for the acute eyes of a careful observer, we may say in a general way that the plants and animals of the accessible portions of the earth, from the seashore up to the limit of perpetual snow, are now tolerably well known to naturalists. How much remains to be discovered in the deserts of Central Africa, Asia, and Australia, and in regions from which the barbarous character of the population keeps out scientific travellers, it is difficult to estimate.

Man is, however, a land animal, and the land occupies less than a third of the earth's surface. The remainder belongs to the ocean—a world with its own animal and vegetable population, more numerous, and scarcely less varied than that of the land. A small space is common to the two worlds, where the tide in its constant oscillation gives alternate access to the two oceans of air and water that enclose our planet. The best conception we can form of the organized world beneath the sea, as it would appear to us if we could freely explore it, is by considering it as a world turned up-side down, wherein depth below the surface of the sea corresponds in most respects with height above the same level in our ordinary land-world; and the chief cause is the same in both cases. With partial exceptions, such as occur on the land, the temperature of the sea falls as we descend below its surface; and even in the hottest parts of the earth the bottom of the deep ocean-valleys is as constantly and uniformly cold as the tops of the highest mountains. But in the sea there is a limit that is not found on land. The only reason why the deep sea is cold is that cold water, whether salt or fresh, is heavier than warm water. The currents that constantly flow from the poles towards the tropics, to supply the place of the water taken away by evaporation, sink to the bottom, and as each supply becomes gradually warmed, the fresh stream of cold water pouring in from the same source passes downwards and fills the deepest hollows. But water, as is well known, does not constantly increase in weight up to the very moment when it becomes ice. Not only is ice lighter than water, but, when approaching the freezing point, water begins gradually to expand, and therefore to weigh less than it did when less cold; and accordingly that heaviest state of water in which it sinks to the bottom of the sea is some degrees warmer than the freezing point. This is, therefore, the greatest cold that is found at the bottom of the ocean, and of itself is not inconsistent with the growth of many species of plants and animals.

There is, however, another cause at work in the depths of the sea that limits the spread of organic life as much as the perpetual snow of the mountains does in the higher parts of the continents. With few exceptions, light is as necessary to all creatures that live as heat is. On the mountain tops, though the diffused light is less, the direct light of the sun is more intense than in the plains; but water absorbs light much faster than the air does, and at a depth equal to the height of one of our highest British mountains, the bottom of the sea would appear to our senses to be involved in nearly complete darkness. There is no doubt that this is the chief cause of the rapid diminution in the number of plants and animals that live on the sea-bottom when we pass from the shore to a depth of a few hundred feet. Fishes frequently dive to considerable depths, returning again to the surface, just as there are birds that soar high and return to their homes on the earth; but the creatures that are fixed to a single spot, or are not able to travel far and fast, must find in the spot where they grow the conditions that are necessary for their health. Hence it is that while on land a low hill shows little or no difference of fauna and flora from the surrounding plain, a corresponding depression under the sea will pass through a number of successive zones, characterized by completely different species, and even by different tribes, of living creatures.

Of animals that live chiefly or altogether in the sea we have not now to speak. They are almost as varied in structure and in the number of their species as the population of the dry land. If we may include birds that live on the sea, though their real home is the rocky coast, every class and larger tribe of animals is represented. This is not the case with the vegetable population, which consists almost exclusively of the class of plants that are known by the name of sea-weeds. The term is very incorrect, as a large number of these plants inhabit fresh-water streams and lakes, and even grow on damp walls and rocks. Some of them grow and multiply in the snows of the Polar regions and of high mountains—others live in sulphurous springs—and some, strangest of all, actually vegetate in the boiling springs of Iceland. Wherever their home may be, we have no other English name than sea-weeds by which to designate these productions of nature; and the Latin term *algæ*, used by botanists, expressed in its origin exactly the same idea, the reason in both cases being that the most numerous, the most conspicuous and best known plants of the class are those that inhabit the coast and the shallow parts of the sea. It is true that many plants of other tribes prefer to live within reach of the ocean spray, or in salt marshes, where their roots plunge into soil moistened by the tide. Every one who lives near to the coast knows that there are many flowers seen on the rocks and sands that are not seen inland. It is a curious fact that several of these are found again on the tops of our highest mountains. The scurvy grass, the sea pink, and the sea catchfly, are well-known instances. Botanists who love to dwell on minute differences have sought to question the identity of the mountain and sea forms

of these plants, but they show less of difference than is constantly found between specimens of the same plant found in distant stations, and the cause is probably to be sought in some similarity of natural conditions that has not yet been detected or explained. Even the delicate tribe of ferns is represented on our coasts by one species that haunts the recesses of the rocks upon the rugged western coast beaten by the ceaseless breakers of the Atlantic. Mosses and mushrooms shrink from the sea air, but there are lichens that clothe the rocks down to the very margin of the tide; and two or three doubtful species, probably belonging to the same class, actually grow below that limit, where they are almost constantly wetted by the salt water.

Of plants having a higher organization than sea-weeds there are, however, very few that perform the essential functions of nutrition and reproduction when immersed in the sea. The best known of these is the sea-wrack, whose long ribbon-like leaves are sometimes thrown upon the shore in large masses after a storm. It is like in structure to the pond-weeds that are seen in summer floating on the surface of slow rivers and pools. When we have excepted the sea-wrack and a small number of allied species, all the remaining vegetation of the sea belongs to the single class of sea-weeds. They have been studied with great perseverance and success during the last thirty years by Swedish, German, French, and Italian naturalists; but the single labours of Professor Harvey, of Trinity College, Dublin, have far exceeded in their practical results those of any other labourer in the same field. In a series of beautiful works he has described and illustrated the sea-weeds of our own coasts, those of North America, and of a still less explored field—the Southern Ocean, from Western Australia to Cape Horn.

If further assistance were wanting to the study of British sea-weeds—which may perhaps be doubted—it will be found in the work of which the first volume is now before us. It might have been thought that the substance of sea-weeds was too soft and gelatinous to make it possible to apply to them the new art of nature-printing, in which the object is made to impress its own form on the plate from which it is printed off. We know nothing of the means used to overcome this difficulty, but we are bound to say that they have been in nearly every case successful; and that the result is a very beautiful work that cannot fail to extend still farther the taste for this branch of natural science. With the exception of some species too minute to be reproduced in their natural dimensions, and of a few others that assume a calcareous coat that unfits them for the processes of nature-printing, nearly all the British Rhodospores, or Red sea-weeds, are represented in the present volumes in so perfect a manner that it is impossible even for a beginner not to recognise them; and if we have any complaint to make against the work, it is that it but too completely fulfils the popular demand in regard to books of natural history. In spite of weighty remonstrances from the highest authorities, the common idea of the scope and objects of natural science remains pretty nearly the same. To be able to give to every plant and animal a correct Latin name is to be a master of botany and zoology; and this, accordingly, is the great object which amateur students usually propose to themselves—ignorant or forgetful of the fact that the nomenclature is the mere dictionary of the science, and that the systematic arrangement of the objects which are known does little more than marshal in full array the series of creatures whose intimate structure and mode of life should be the aim of careful study and observation.

The authors whose names are on the title-page have postponed to the close of their work that which we conceive to be the indispensable preliminary to the study which it is designed to facilitate. It is well that those who live on, or visit, the sea-coast should be induced to give some attention to the beautiful objects that abound there; and of them all the sea-weeds are the most easily collected and preserved. So far as the unassisted eye can go, the plates to the present work almost completely supply the place of the objects themselves; but more important than to know the names which naturalists have chosen to give to each of them, it is to know what sea-weeds are, how they grow, and how they reproduce themselves; and for information on these points those who purchase this volume are desired to wait until the work is closed. It is in regard to the processes of reproduction, in particular, that, in the interest of science itself, it is important to direct the attention and train the faculties of new observers, for it is impossible to doubt that an ample harvest awaits the labourers who may be induced to devote themselves to patient study in this field. The development of the germs that are to continue the life of the plant, either within the cells of the parent or in special organs provided for the purpose, has been very carefully observed; but the complete series of changes by which, from those germs, a new being similar to the parent is reproduced, cannot yet be said to be fully investigated. It is not likely that all sea-weeds present an exception to the law of alternate generation, which is the general rule of development amongst the lower tribes of animals and plants. The perfect parent produces a germ from which a new creature is developed widely different from the first; but this in its turn, by one or more successive acts of vital power, reproduces the original condition of the plant or animal. This has not yet been fully observed among sea-weeds, but it is most probable that something of the kind takes place, and equally likely that further study and observation will show that there

have been grouped together under this name organized beings profoundly different in structure and in the law of their development, which should form more than a single class in the series of organized beings. This may perhaps already be asserted in regard to the lowest tribe of sea-weeds, the Palmelleæ, in which the processes of growth and reproduction seem to be confounded in the simple mode of increase by which these organisms are multiplied. Except in the fact that they inhabit the same element, it is hard to see how these can be classed along with the more highly organized *algæ*, whose reproduction is secured by an elaborate combination of special organs—one set of them producing germs destined to become new plants, which are fertilized by contact with minute semi-animate globules produced within a different organ of the parent plant.

If those who purchase the beautiful plates of this new work will not merely content themselves with the amusement of identifying the specimens they may gather on our rocky coasts, but are led to trace the marvellous provisions of Nature by which the existence of the vegetation of the sea-bottom is sustained and renewed, a great increase of rational enjoyment will be brought within the reach of many who are at a loss for a resource to pass pleasantly their time in some of our dull sea-coast neighbourhoods; and out of the number some new observers may possibly be drawn out who may help to clear away a part of the obscurity that rests on a beautiful branch of natural science.

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THE LAST FIVE PERFORMANCES of Madlle. PICCOLOMINI, previous to her final retirement from the stage, will commence on WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18th, when she will appear in her favourite character, *Violetta*, in *LA TRAVIATA*, and positively terminate on April 20th. This engagement cannot be extended under any circumstances.

CRYSTAL PALACE.—GOOD FRIDAY.—The Palace and Park will be opened at Nine A.M. Trains will run as often as required from London Bridge, Finsbury, and Intermediate Stations.

Madlle. PICCOLOMINI and other Artists will appear in a GRAND VOCAL and INSTRUMENTAL CONCERT, to commence at Three o'clock. Admission, One Shilling; Children under Twelve, Sixpence; Reserved Seats, Half-a-crown extra.

CRYSTAL PALACE.—PASSION WEEK and EASTER WEEK.—Madlle. PICCOLOMINI will sing in a DAILY CONCERT. Admission, as usual, One Shilling, except on Saturdays, Half-a-crown. Transferable Reserved Seats, Half-a-crown each, for either day; or, for the Series of Twelve Concerts, one Guinea, may be secured at the Crystal Palace, or at 2, Exeter-hall; or by order through the usual Agents. The Programme will be varied each day, and will comprise the most popular Pieces in Madlle. PICCOLOMINI's extensive repertoire.

MR. ALBERT SMITH'S CHINA will terminate with the 400th Representation on April 5th. It will be given, until then, Every Night (except Saturday) at Eight o'clock; and Tuesday and Saturday Afternoons at Three o'clock. Stalls, which will be taken at the Box-office, Egyptian Hall; Area, &c.; Gallery, &c. Mr. ALBERT SMITH'S SUMMER SEASON will commence on EASTER MONDAY.

MARRIAGE WITH A WIFE'S SISTER.—All persons desirous of promoting PETITIONS AGAINST THE LEGALIZATION OF MARRIAGE with a WIFE'S SISTER, are requested to apply at once for Petitions prepared for Signature to Mr. W. M. THOLLOPE, Secretary of the Marriage Law Defence Association, 41, Parliament Street, S.W.

N.B.—The Bill will, it is believed, be introduced immediately after Easter, and the industry which those who are seeking to bring about a change in the Law have displayed in procuring Petitions to that effect, renders it absolutely necessary that those opposed to the change should also promptly and distinctly pronounce themselves.

THE ARCHITECTURAL MUSEUM,
SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM, W.

On Wednesday, April 4th, at Eight P.M., a LECTURE will be delivered in the Theatre, "On Architecture as developed by the various Races of Man." By R. H. S. SMITH, Esq., B.A., Assistant Keeper of the Art Museum.

Subscribers and Artist Workmen may obtain Cards of the Attendee in the Gallery of the Architectural Museum; at the offices of the Builder (York-street, Covent-garden) and Building News (Old Bowtell-court, Strand); or by letter to the Honorary Secretary, at 18, Stratford-place, W.

GEO. GILBERT SCOTT, A.R.A., Treasurer.

JOSEPH CLARKE, F.R.A., Hon. Sec.

M. LOUIS BLANC'S LECTURE as in the "TIMES" for TUESDAY, APRIL 3rd.—The Times made a mistake on the 24th and 27th by stating Thursday instead of Tuesday.

M. LOUIS BLANC, late Member of the Provisional Government of France, will deliver FOUR LECTURES, at the MARTLEBONE LITERARY INSTITUTION, on the "Salons" of Paris in the Eighteenth Century; Social Intercourse—Fashion—Love—Philosophy—on Wednesday Evenings, April 25th, May 2nd, 9th, and 16th. To commence each evening at Eight o'clock. Reserved Seats, 5s.; ditto for the Course, 10s. Area and Gallery, 3s. 6d.; ditto for the Course, 8s. Tickets may be obtained, and Reserved Seats secured, by early application to the Secretary, at the Institution, 17, Edward-street, Portman-square.

ST. MARTIN'S HALL.—Mr. HENRY FAWCETT, Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, has been requested to deliver an ADDRESS on "The Political Economy and Tendency of Strikes," on THURSDAY evening, April 5th.

The Chair will be taken at Eight o'clock by Sir JAMES KAY SHUTTLEWORTH, Bart., who presided at the discussion on Trades Unions, at the meeting of the Social Science Association, at Bradford, in October last.

Admission free, except to a limited number of seats, which will be reserved. Tickets to be obtained at the Hall. Stalls, 2s. 6d. each; Gallery and Platform Tickets, 1s. each.

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FOREST HILL SCHOOL, near Sydenham, S.E.—Pupils can now be admitted for the ensuing Quarter or Term. Prospectus, &c., on application to the Principal, as above; or to Mr. F. H. PALMER, 15, Gracechurch-street, City, E.C.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CHARLTON, near Woolwich.—Principal—The Rev. A. F. THOMSON, B.A. Oxon. There will be THREE VACANCIES in this College at EASTER NEXT for Gentlemen preparing for the Universities, the Indian Civil Service, Indian Civil Engineers, Army Colleges, Navy, &c.

HONOURS GAINED BY THE PRINCIPAL'S PUPILS.

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